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BACK STREET HEROES

APRIL 2025
ISSUE
492

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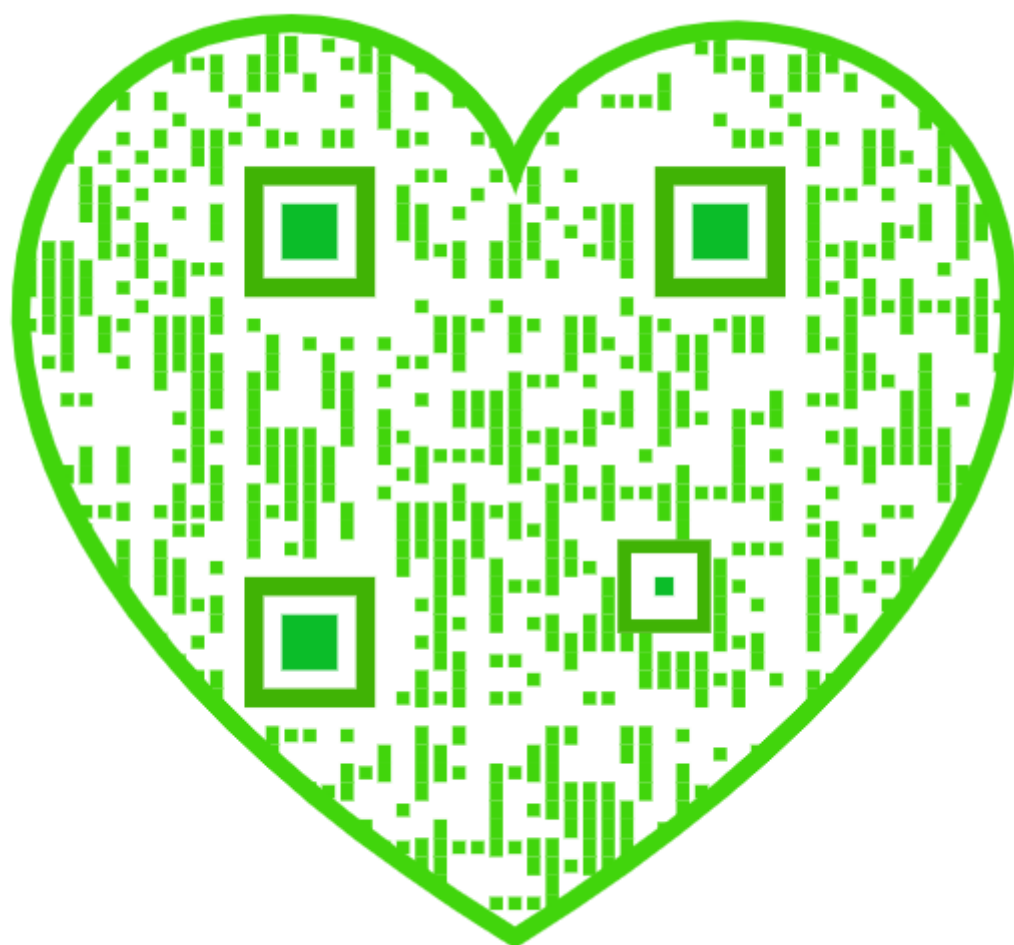


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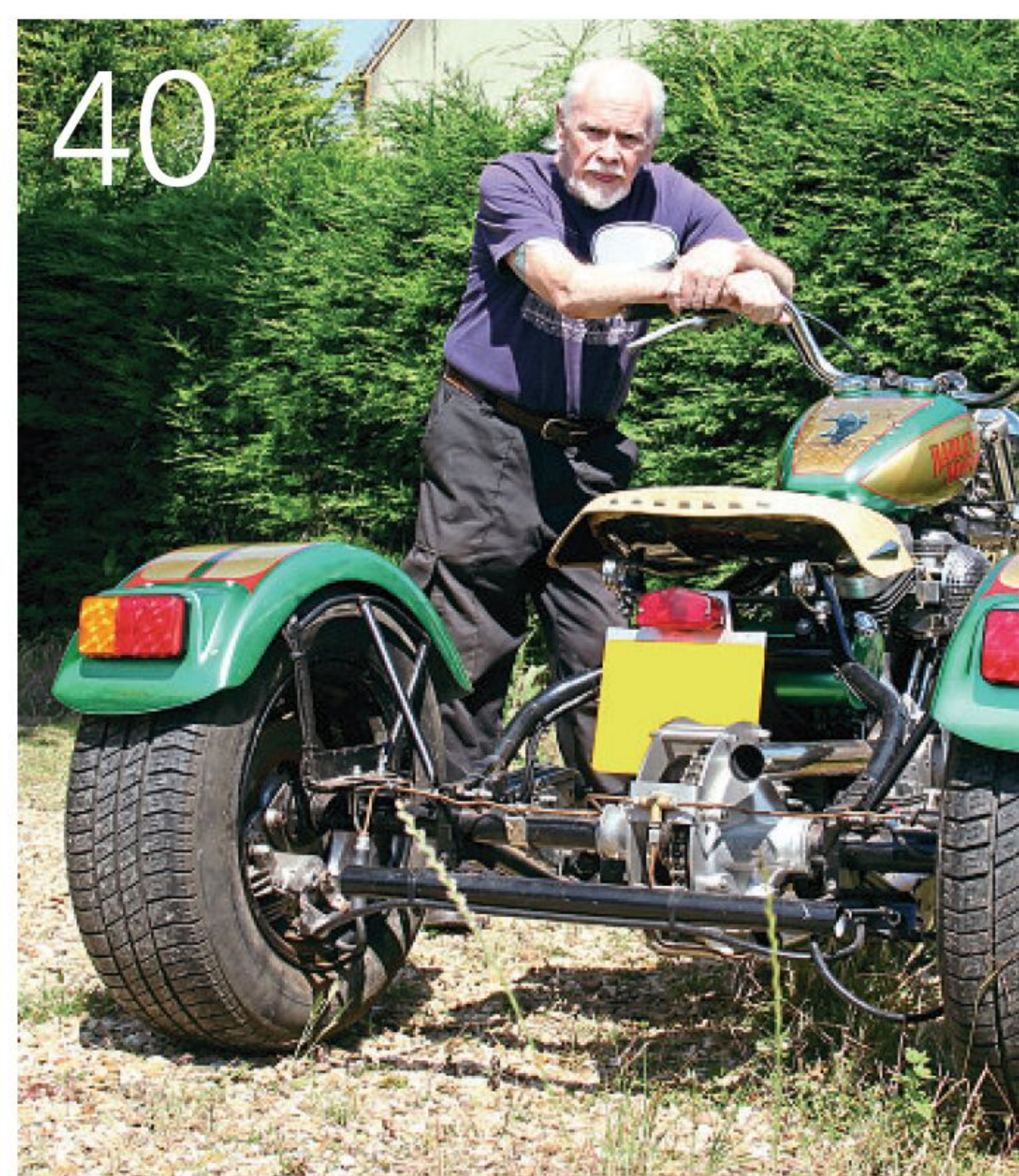
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Editorial

HELLO, AND WELCOME TO ANOTHER ISSUE OF THE UK'S OLDEST AND LONGEST RUNNING CUSTOM BIKE MAGAZINE! HOPE ALL'S GOOD WITH YOU?

I don't know about you, but I really, really, REALLY can't wait for the year to roll around a bit further and temperatures to rise. I know, of course, that one shouldn't wish one's life away, as the old saying goes, and maybe it's the fact that I live in an old, cold house that's affecting my perception of things, but this winter of 2024/2025's really dragging on, isn't it? January '25, they say, was the warmest January since records began (in 1813, would you believe?), but if that's the case why was my electricity bill the highest it's ever been since I moved into the Editorial Hovel fifteen-plus years ago? This isn't what I expected of global warming, I can tell you – I mean, did I puncture all those old fridges and aerosol cans to release the CFCs all those years ago for nothing? The way they were talking back in the early days about climate change I was expecting, by now, to be riding all-year round in just t-shirt and cut-off like all those Americans in the hipster chopper videos on YouTube, and do you know what? I feel more than slightly cheated! (Yes, yes, I know, climate isn't the same as weather, and other places around the world're suffering the effects of us warming the planet more rapidly than has happened previously, but I'm feckin' sick of being cold.)

But anyway, enough o' my whinging – the world is moving on its journey around the sun, and soon the coldness and damp of winter'll be forgotten in the heat and light of spring, summer and autumn, so what've we got coming up for you to look forward to? Well, as I said last month, the events listings're attaining, I think, record capacity – I extended the number o' pages for them this month and guess what? We've still only got room for up to near the end of July! Even March, lowly March, has nearly 30 that I know of (not including bike nights n' that), and April's gone crazy, as has May, before we get into the traditional summer months of June, July and August. In any normal year we'd have, at this time, very few listings past the first or second weekend of September, but they keep rolling in and rolling in and rolling in. Maybe it's a reaction to the world going to hell in a political, financial and climatological handbasket, but us lot o' hairy (and, these days, not so hairy) reprobates seem determined to get out there and have a good time, and I really don't have a problem wi' that at all. We just need it to get a bit feckin' warmer in the meantime!

If you're building a chop, or any other form of custom, that you'd like us to feature, then drop us a line at nik@backstreetheroes.com cos I'm hoping to start getting folk out there to do stuff from next month. We (okay, yes, I) did get a little camera-happy last summer, and photographed far too many bikes, but we're working our way through getting them into the magazine as fast as we can, and we will need to build up a stock for the dark, cold days of next winter, so don't be shy – send in a pic of your pride n' joy and, who knows, you could be seeing it in these pages soon (or next January as the case may be). As usual, if we photographed your bike last year and it hasn't been in yet, please refrain from sticking them pins in that voodoo doll – we will get it in as soon as we can, promise!

We do have some crackers to show you coming up – the latest from, arguably, the best streetfighter builder on the planet (the most creative definitely); new bikes from Destiny Cycles; an insane V6 diesel trike; another asymmetrical Sporty from the frozen north; a so-bling-rappers'd-mug-it hardtail/hardhead Guzzi; a Born Free-worthy Pan/Shovel; an incredibly intricately engraved Sporty; and... and... and... well, loads. We are a little low on old Brit feature bikes though, it has to be said, so show us what y'got, yeah?

Anyway, on that note, I shall sign off, and leave you to peruse the issue at your leisure... whaddya mean you don't read this bit first? Honestly, people have no discipline these days. 🐉

NIK



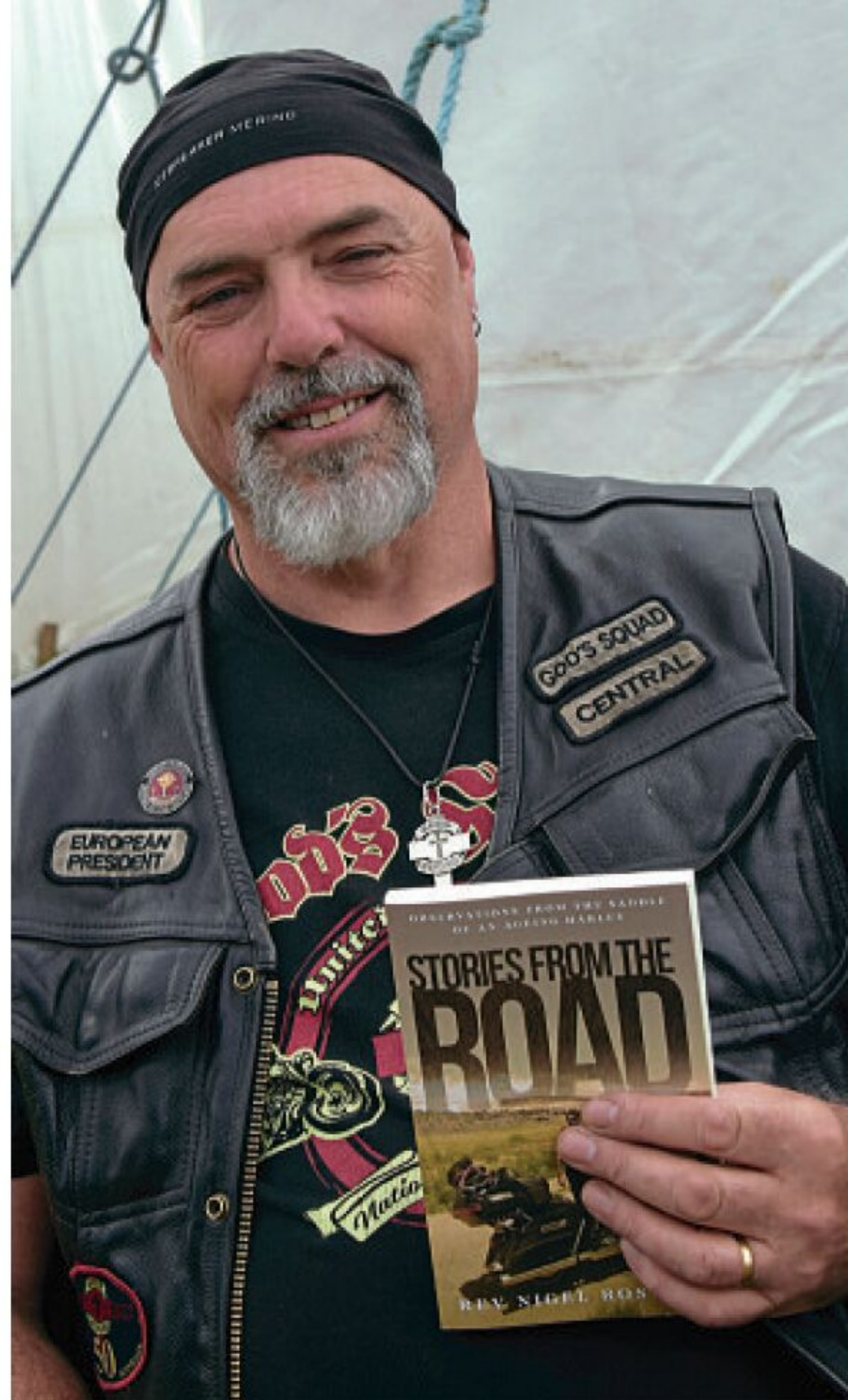


Event ROCK AND BLUES

THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE ROCK & BLUES –
WHO'D'VE THOUGHT BACK
IN 1984 THAT WE'D
STILL BE RIDING AND
RALLYING FORTY
YEARS LATER!







During those forty years the Rock & Blues's resided at three sites – born on a patch of land in Long Eaton, and initially run by Road Tramps MC, with bands setting up on the back of a lorry trailer (as did many rallies back then), in 1985 it moved to Coney Grey Farm, now known as the Coney Grey Showground, with a short sojourn to Donington Park during the Foot & Mouth crisis which severely affected the use of farmland in 2001. At its height, attendance figures were around 15,000, and big headline bands included Hawkwind, Suzi Quatro, Motörhead, Bad Manners, The Stranglers, Jethro Tull, The Commitments,

The Specials, The Levellers, and Bob Geldof. Then, as big bands became less and less affordable, tribute acts rose in popularity – this year's were brilliant, as always, and it's been said current tribute bands now sound better than a lot of the originals (that's probably forty years of technological advances for you). It wasn't only tribute songs – many also play their own music, and some are spin-offs formed when big bands split. Either way, the bands at Rock & Blues are never just tributes – they're all great, and well worth the ticket price. This year Hayseed Dixie, Darren Wharton's Renegade, Dub Pistols, Women in Rock UK, Dr & The Medics, and Muddibrooke were just a few of the 25 on offer. The Reenie's

Rockettes dance troupe also performed on the main stage – these ladies get better year on year, absolutely filling the stage with four completely different show sets over the two main days.

The bike show marquee had a constant flow of connoisseurs and browsers milling about, and one bike, with its matt black painted tank, was getting lots of attention, both on site and on social media, due to the humorous messages being chalked on the tank by the owner. I spent more hours than most in that marquee, and never once saw him do it!

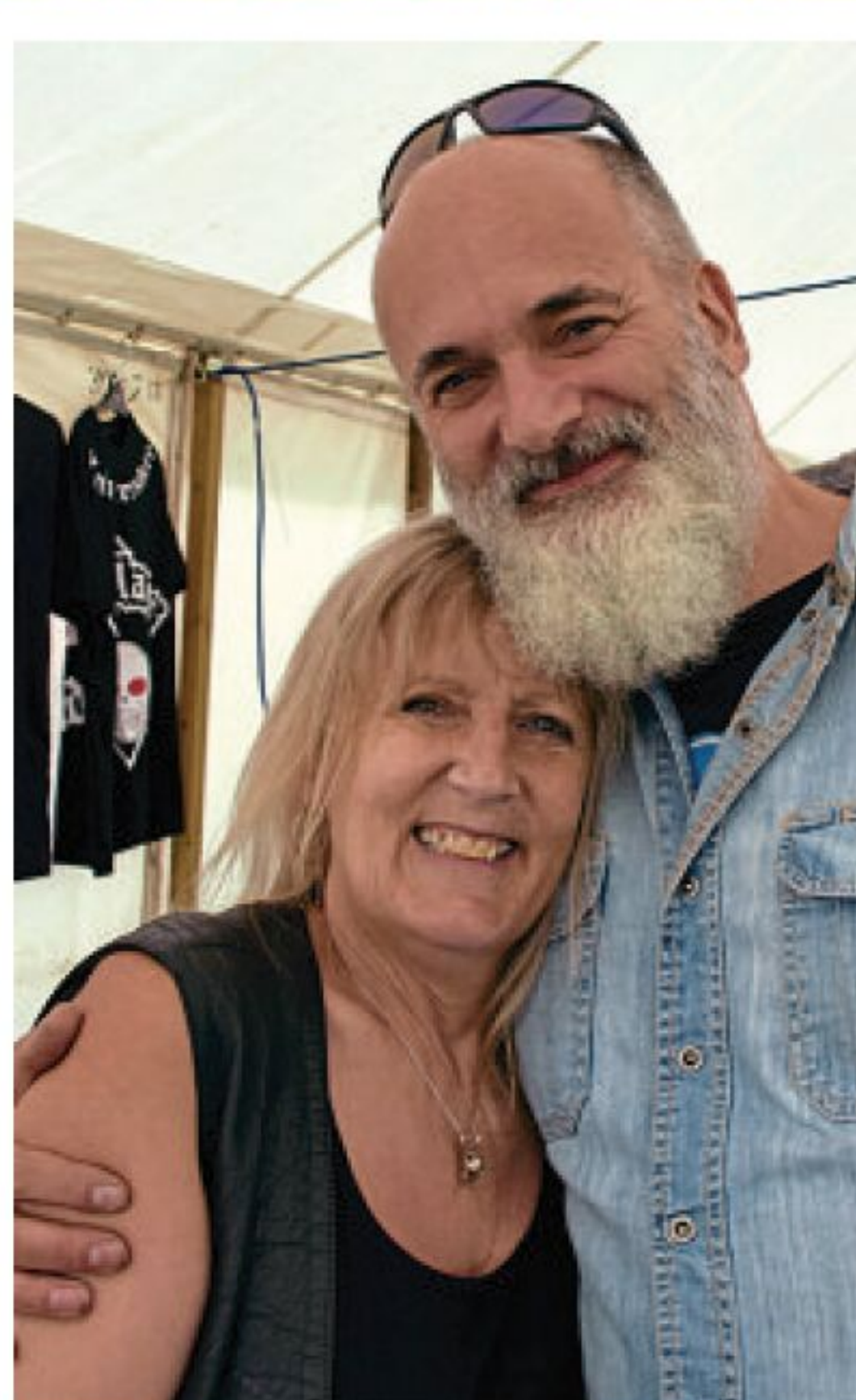
The Rock & Blues was conceived in a bygone era, and it's a sign of true commitment to a waning lifestyle that it's

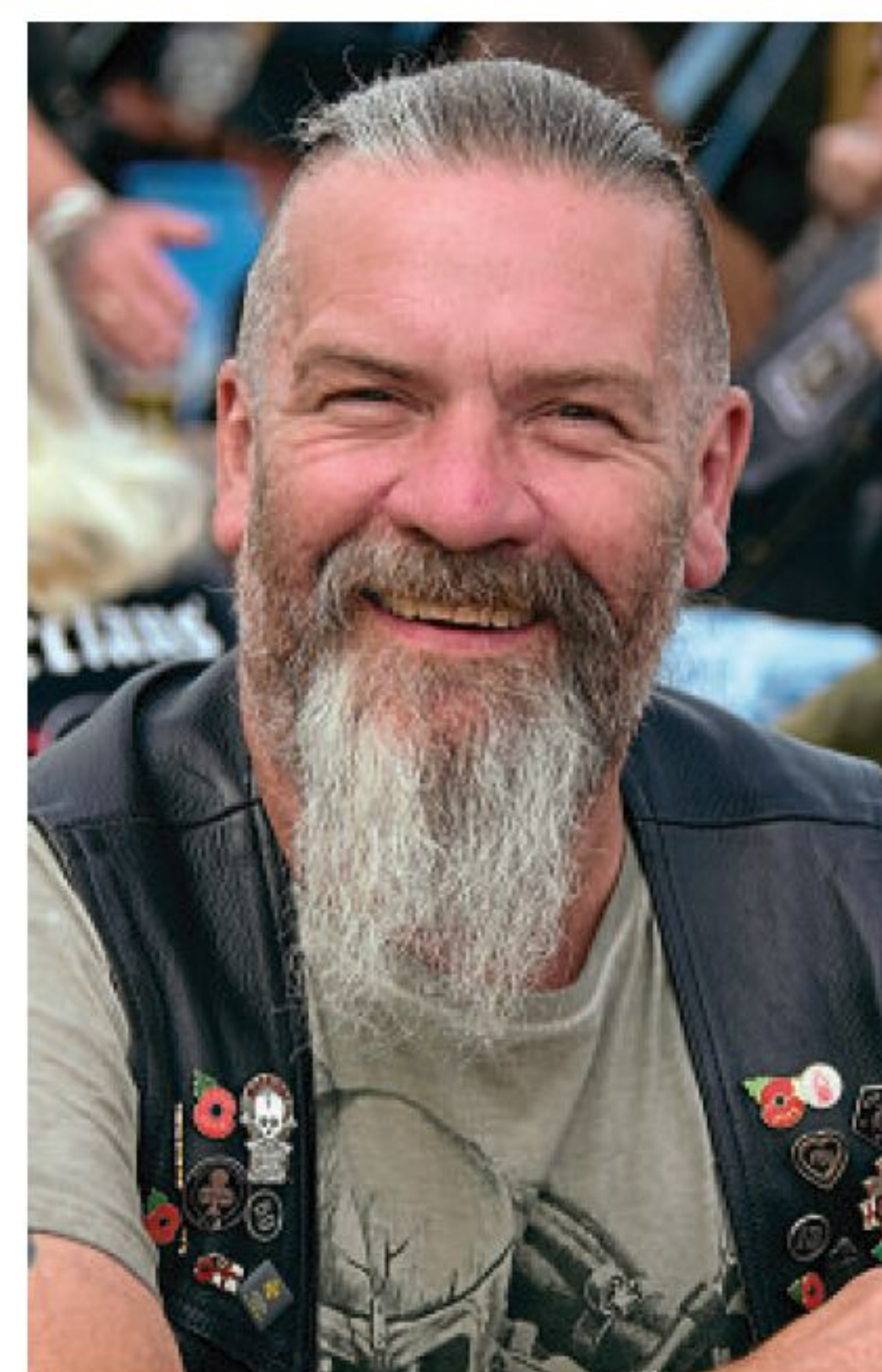
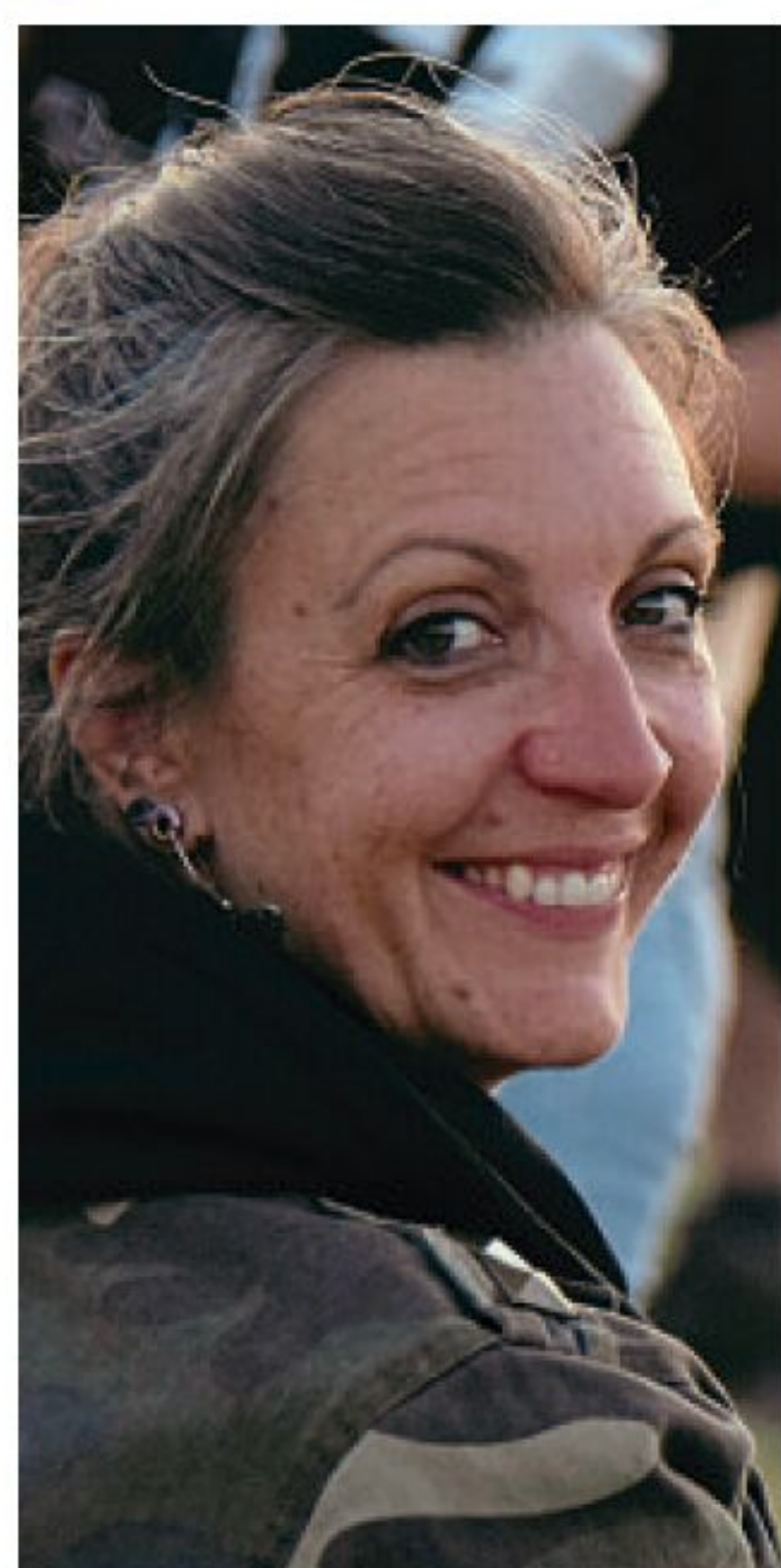
survived this far through time and changing societal expectations. Events now must be more than beer, bands, and bikes – people expect to be entertained during the day, and it's not easy coming up with something different each year to keep them interested. This year saw the return of the outside stage, which hosts six bands in the afternoons and early evening both Friday and Saturday, and drew quite a crowd in the warm, early evening sunshine. The Druzno Mercenaries Viking Re-Enactment group had an encampment on site, and gave short skirmish displays, demonstrating the Viking lifestyle with whole families in costume. They'll be back at the next event with a

bigger party, and hope to be re-enacting, amongst other things, two large battles daily. The main arena shows this year were put on by Stuntworld International – Brian Cooper, Stewart Shaw, Mark Stannage, Ryan Griffiths and Conor Brennan put on four fabulous jump and stunt riding shows with both bikes and quads.

Bike rallies've always had a charitable presence and because, this year, one of the organising teams had the misfortune to've been battling prostate cancer, he took to the stage on Saturday night and gave a heartfelt account of the importance of identifying the disease as early as possible, and the continuing need

for research. Collection buckets were passed through the crowd, raising a very impressive £1,800 for Prostate Cancer UK. Other organisations on site were Gears of Goodwill, a volunteer event-funded charity focused on helping and feeding the homeless in Derby city centre, and, of course, the NABD stall who work for bikers with disabling circumstances, enabling them to stay on, or get back on, the road. Phil Morris, who's been their stall manager for 11 years, met his lady, Dawn, at an event and she's been helping him run it for the last six years, working to raise in the region of £100,000 for NABD during his time, but this was to be his last appearance at





the Rock & Blues as he's retiring from the stall, so they celebrated the end of one era and the beginning of another by having a handfasting ceremony in the main arena with their Rock & Blues family.

The crowning glory of the Rock and Blues, though, is the custom bike show judged by Vic and Lin Jefford and, as always, this year had some spectacular entries in all eighteen categories. Best Paint went to Larry (Essex)'s Softtail with its beautiful burgundy with gold scrollwork by Air FX of Norwich; Best Streetfighter went to Buster Lakey's cherry red 1200 Bandit (painted by Prime. design.paints in Dover); Best Engineering to Phil James' beautifully-engineered café-style custom XJ550; Best Vintage to

Luke Maltby's '55 Panhead; Best Car/Van to a 1958 Ford Pop hot rod; Best Ladies to Michelle Tarbatt's Bandit café racer (built by Chris Littlewood who also took a runner-up trophy); Best Chopper to Mareus' beautiful metalflake green Shovel; Best Harley to Lance Hows' turquoise blue Harley; and Best in Show to Craig White's 'Predator', built by Destiny Cycles back in 2002/3 – it won 'Best' at the show in 2003, and still looks pristine all these years later.

Runner-up winners were: Paint went to Daz King's Sex Pistols Rocket 3; Streetfighter to Chris Littlewood's BFO Switchblade; Engineering to Roy Gilby's XV1000 bike and trailer; Vintage to Chris Holt's ex-Royal Signals White Helmets Tiger

750 (the one he himself rode in the team); Car/Van to Kev Branston's '68 Mustang; Ladies to Sharon Branston's Forty-Eight Sporty; Chopper to Jay Harvey's 1200 Bandit; Harley to Polly's 'Sleazy Rider' S&S; and Runner-Up Best in Show went to Paul Stolworthy's Revtech – a complete curve-ball as he's previously been a dedicated streetfighter man.

Many thanks to all the clubs and helpers who work tirelessly to put on this marvellous event, and special thanks to Clive, aka the Doctor, for compering. The next Rock & Blues is 24–27 July, and tickets, VIP packages and glamping tents're bookable through the website at www.rockandblues.com 🐾

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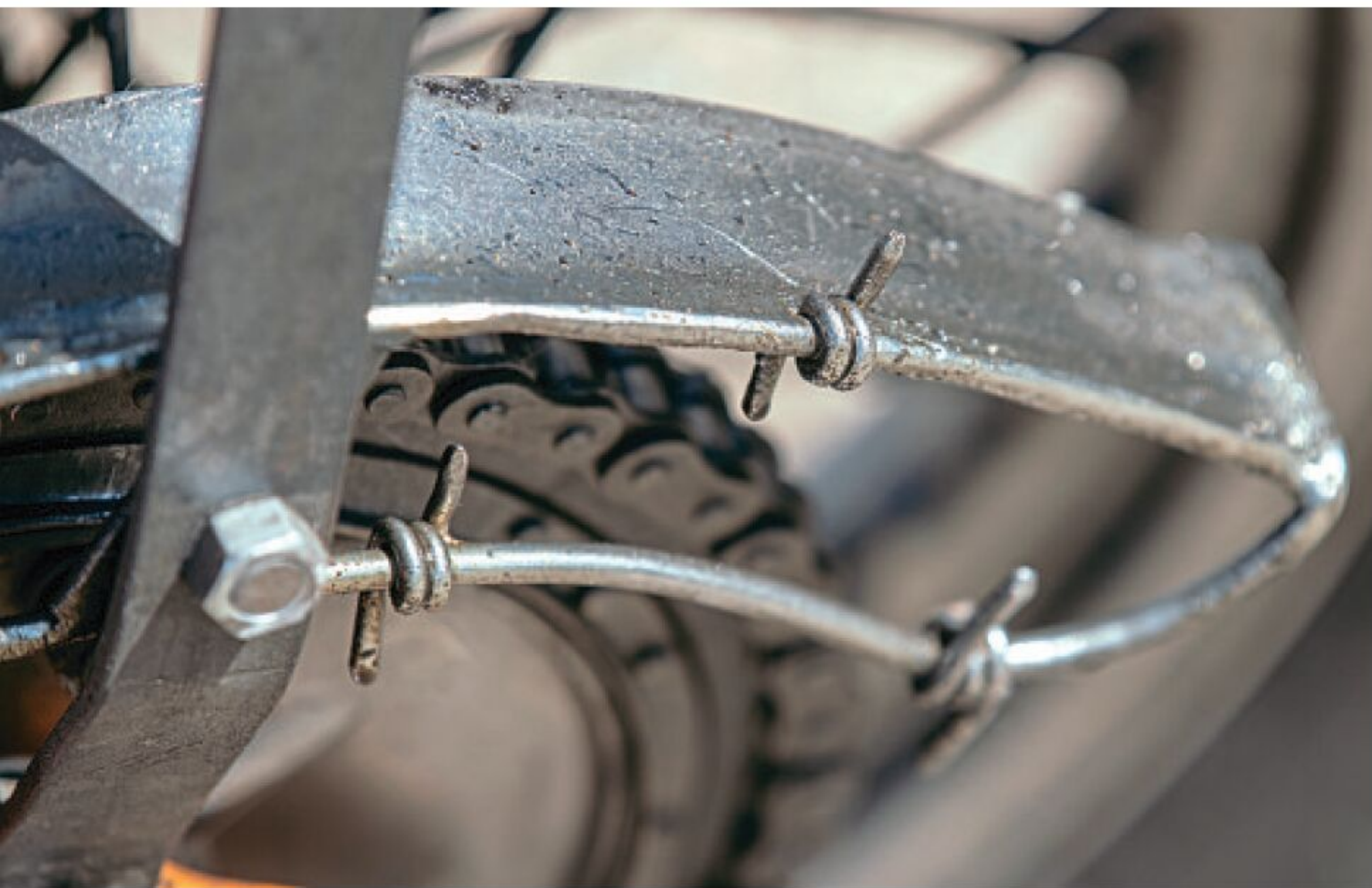
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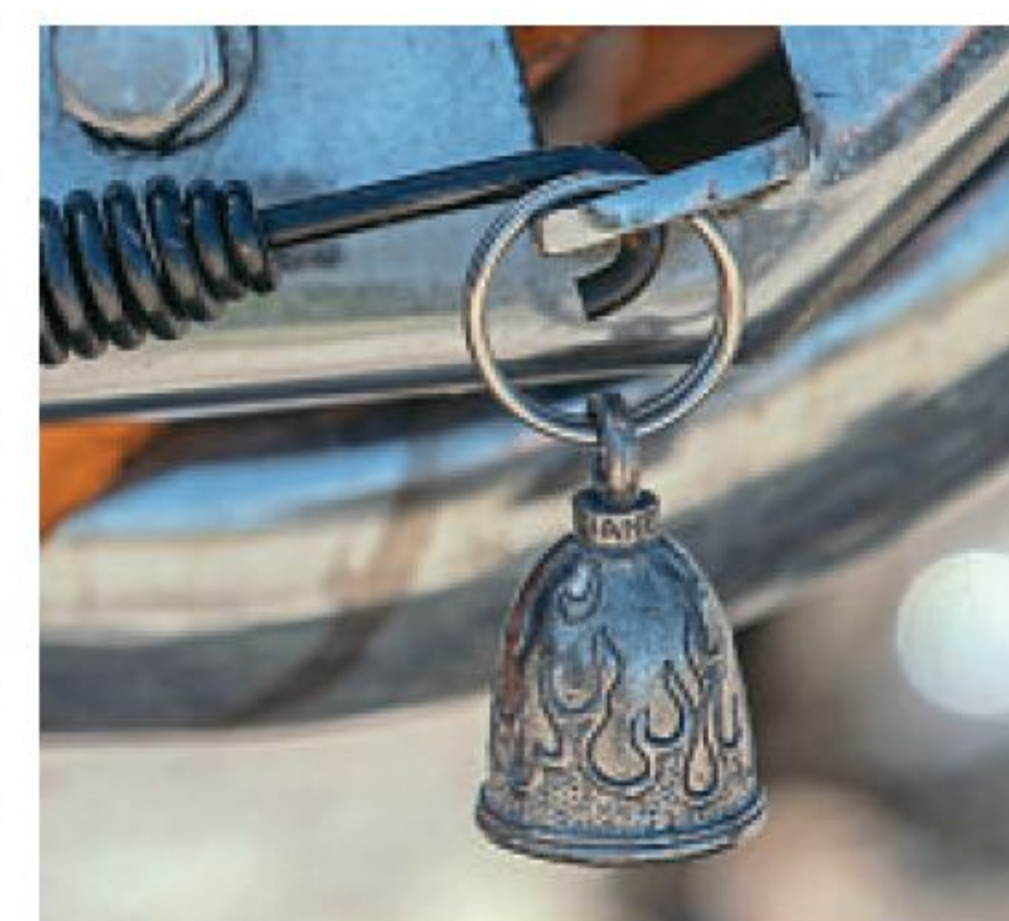


EL PANHEAD

EL BERNARDES GOT HER PANHEAD, A 1956 FLF (THE SECOND F SHOWS IT'S A HAND-CLUTCH/FOOT-SHIFTER), IN 2020 DURING THE PANDEMIC AS A FAIRLY STOCK 'UN AND, AS SHE'S ALWAYS ADMIRED THE JAPANESE CHOPPER SCENE, AND THE WOMEN WHO RODE CHOPPERS OVER THERE IN PARTICULAR, REASONED THAT IF THEY COULD DO IT, SO COULD SHE.









UK – it's not a 'fender') is a cut-down NOS (new old stock) item held on by a one-off sissybar; the oil tank's a horseshoe 'un that cradles the battery, too; and the 'plate-holder's very cool, made from barbed wire (as is the chainguard). The snake side-stand's pretty cool, too.

Motorwise, the engine and 'box're pretty much as the famous 'im, 'im, and 'im intended, just carefully rebuilt to mostly stock specs bar, a Super E carb and suitable-looking aftermarket air-cleaner, a sensible electronic ignition, and a very sensible belt primary conversion. The exhausts're upswept cocktail-shakers, with a neat little heatshield for her leg when she needs to put her foot down to stop, and give the bike such a strong part of its visual identity.

Once the shakedown period was over, and the bike'd proved itself reliable, she used it on several trips that year, but it was the following year that she truly got to enjoy it, riding it through the UK, and across Belgium, Holland, Sweden and France. When winter arrived, and her Pan-riding adventures had to pause, she came up with the idea of doing a cross-country trip of the USA – buy a bike in California, ride it across the country, and then ship it back to the UK, and so she commissioned Marcus Ellis in Sonora, California, to build her a hardtail Shovelhead. Many people told her that trip would change her, but it wasn't 'til she reflected on the journey

afterwards that she truly understood its impact. She says she had so many breakdowns as the bike was only ready two days after she'd arrived to pick it up so its shakedown was on the trip itself – every day brought a new story, a new breakdown, a new challenge, and at the time it was exhausting, but looking back, she wouldn't've changed a thing. "The experience," she says, "taught me so much about myself, pushed me to learn about the bike, and introduced me to so many people who helped along the way."

When she returned to the UK, she experienced a serious case of post-trip blues, so started writing about the journey to capture every detail, and that eventually turned into a book, 'Chrome Chronicles: My Solo Adventure Across the Land of the Free' (still available for sale through her Instagram page @eltattoo). Then, last year, she visited Japan for the first time, and had the unforgettable experience of riding to Mount Fuji with friends, and riding choppers at BG Taka's place. They also visited the massive Mooneyes show which, she says, was phenomenal – "It's easy to see why people from all over the world come to experience it. I'm looking forward to going back to Japan and exploring even more – as a tattoo artist, I'm fortunate to have the freedom to travel often, work around my own schedule, and explore new places. I've had the opportunity to work in so many different locations, and alongside incredibly talented artists, and I don't take any of it for granted. I love my job and the opportunities it gives me to meet new people and see the world."

Sounds like a perfect lifestyle, don't you think? 🐍

DEL HICKEY

SPEC:

1956 H-D Panhead
1200 engine/
gearbox (S&S
Super E carb,
aftermarket
air-cleaner,
aftermarket belt
primary drive,
aftermarket
electronic ignition,
upswept cocktail-
shaker exhausts)/
frame, aftermarket
side-stand, one-
off footrests, 21-
inch front wheel,
H-D 'hamburger'
front drum
brake, 33.4mm
H-D forks/
yokes, Bobby
Good Times
'bars, vintage
switchgear/
controls, Pangea
grips, Wassell
petrol tank, one-
off seat, NOS H-D
rear mudguard
(modified), one-
off sissybar, HD
horseshoe oil tank,
one-off barbed
wire 'plate-holder,
18-inch H-D drum
brake wheel, one-
off minimal loom,
Bates headlight,
aftermarket tail-
light

FINISH:

Oil tank/rear
'guard aged/
painted to match
original tank,
hand-painted
crown of thorns on
tank, by owner

ENGINEERING:

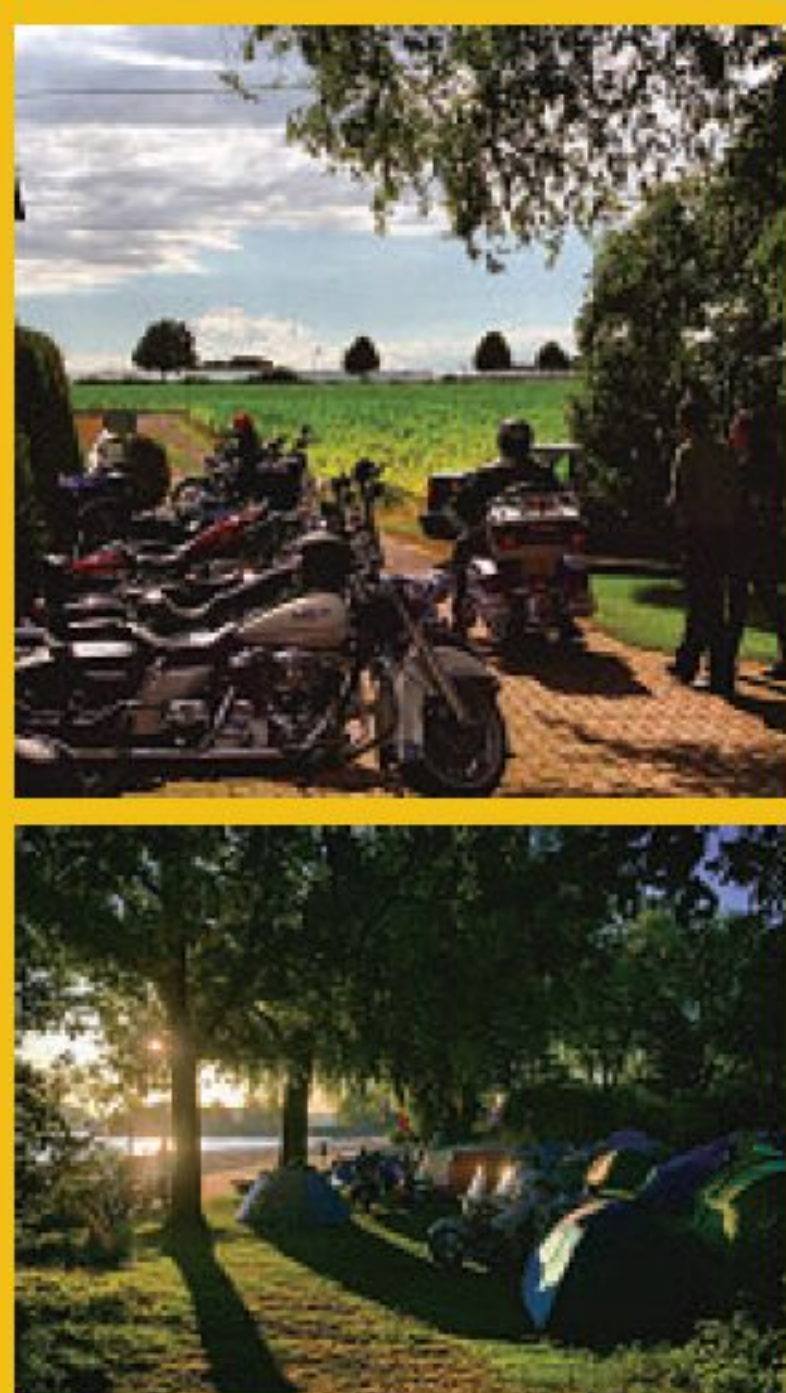
Bike built by
owner & friend;
seat by Glen's
Custom Leathers

She lived in Switzerland at the time, and although the country offered incredible scenery for riding, its strict vehicle laws made owning a rigid chopper challenging. At the time, she had an Evo Sportster custom, but longed for something older and cooler so, after doing some research, decided on a Fifties Pan because to build and own a rigid-framed bike in Switzerland, the rules stated it needed to be pre-1957... and 'cos it's a Panhead, too, of course.

Eventually a suitable one was found and purchased but, due to the pandemic, it took several months to arrive. Once it did, she realised it'd need a complete rebuild to pass the Swiss inspection laws, and to make it the bike she wanted it to be, so she, and an older biker friend, took on the task, in the end keeping only the original engine and transmission. The rebuild took a total of about nine months and, just as they finished, she decided to move back to the UK, which made the shakedown process much easier.

The bike runs a pair of spoked drum brake wheels (21-inch front, 18-inch rear), and a set of what vintage Harley aficionados called a '33.4 hamburger front end' – a set of 33.4mm forks as fitted to the original K-model Sportsters from 1964-72, and a large 'hamburger' drum brake (so called 'cos it looks like the top of a hamburger... apparently) as fitted to Sporties of the same year, and early Super Glides, too. They're topped with a set of Bobby Good Times' (or Rob Hultz, as he's known by his mum) 'bars, and sits just in front of an original Wassell from back in the day which she's left as is 'cos it looked so cool with its dents and patina, other than adding the crown of thorns motif. The seat was made by a guy in Switzerland to her design; the rear mudguard (we're in the

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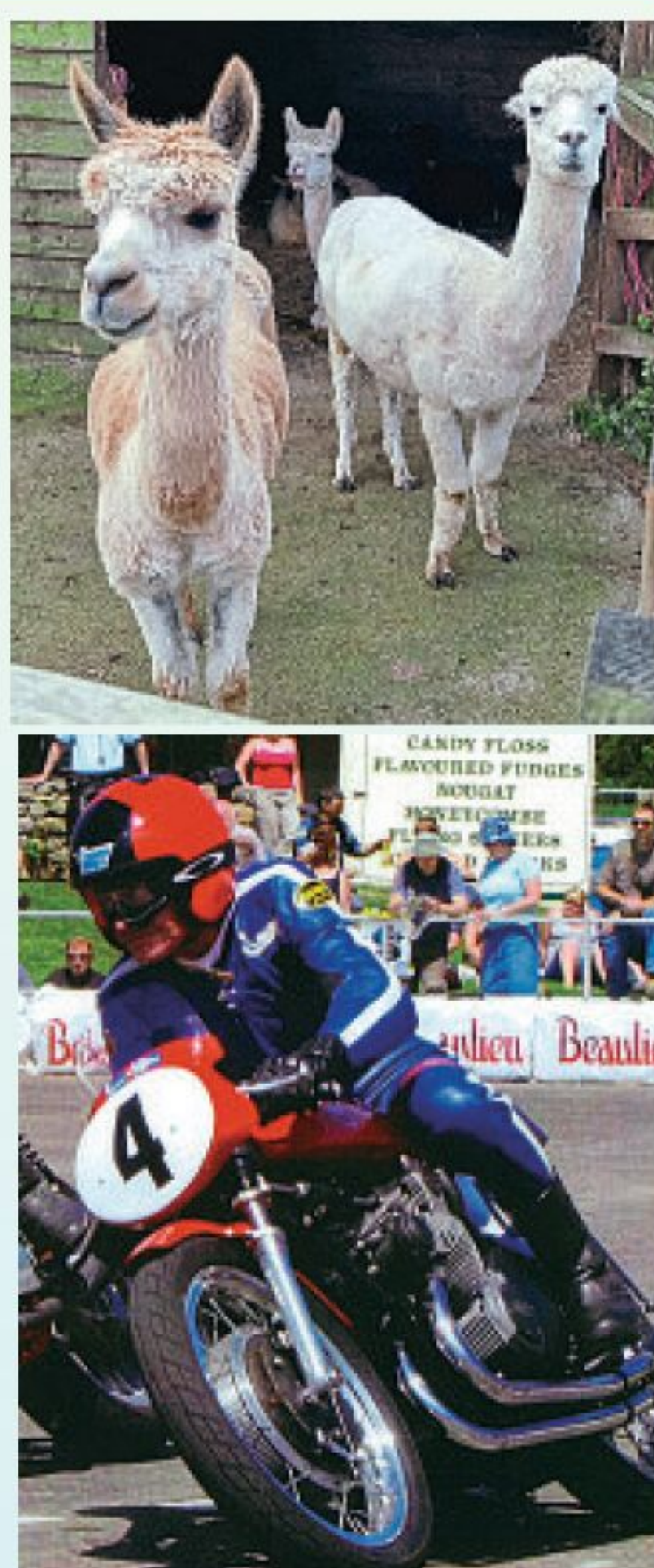
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Event

BAD WABBITT SHINDIG

ONE THING I'VE FOUND IS BIKERS IN GENERAL ARE AN ADAPTABLE LOT, AND CAN USUALLY FIND WAYS ROUND BARRIERS – WHEN THE REGULAR VENUE FOR THE BAD WABBIT SHINDIG PUT A BLANKET BAN ON ALL OUTSIDE EVENTS, DUE TO NIMBY NEIGHBOURS, THEY, AND A FEW OTHER CLUBS, HAD TO LOOK FOR A NEW VENUE IN QUITE A SHORT TIME.





W

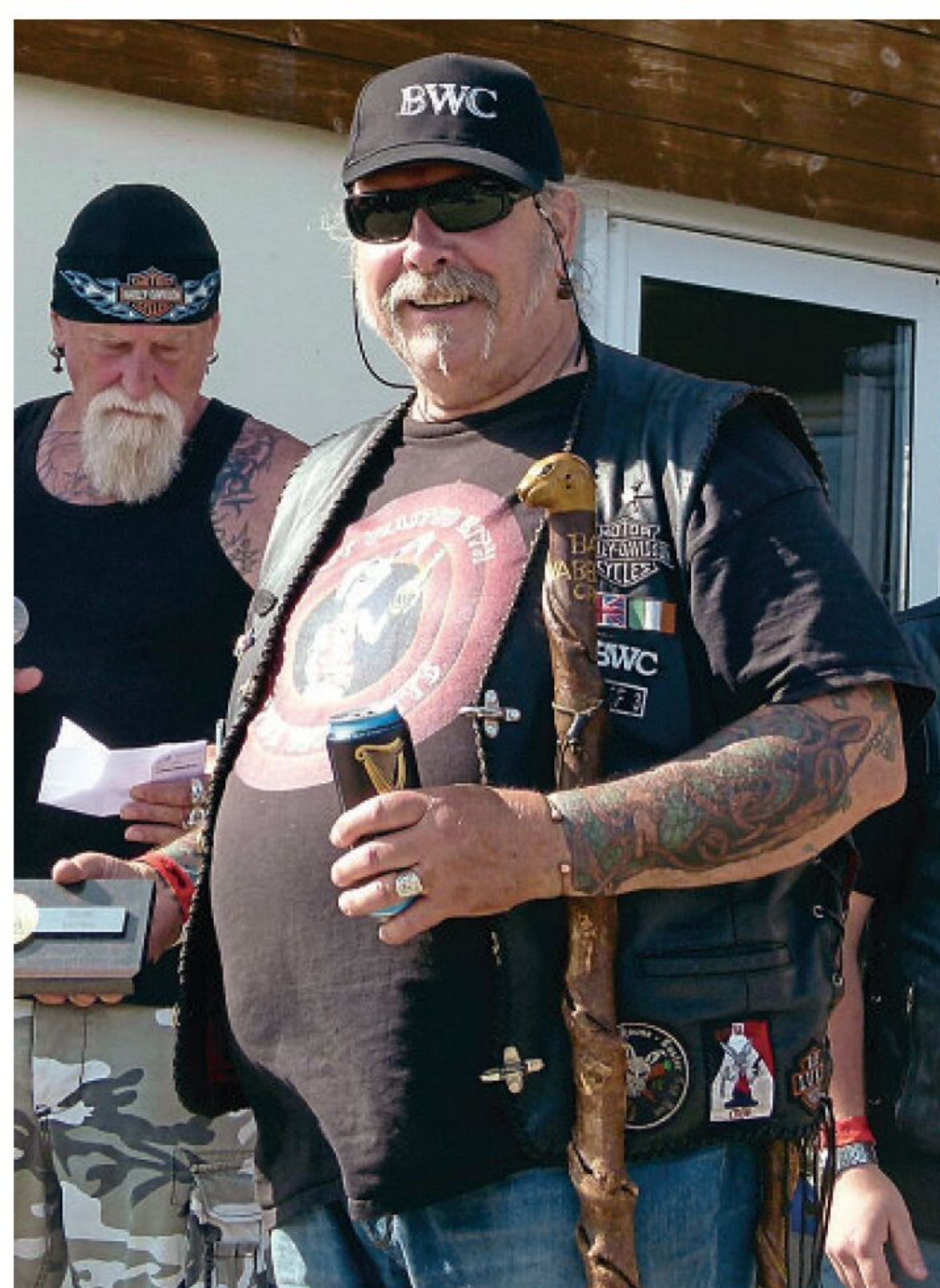
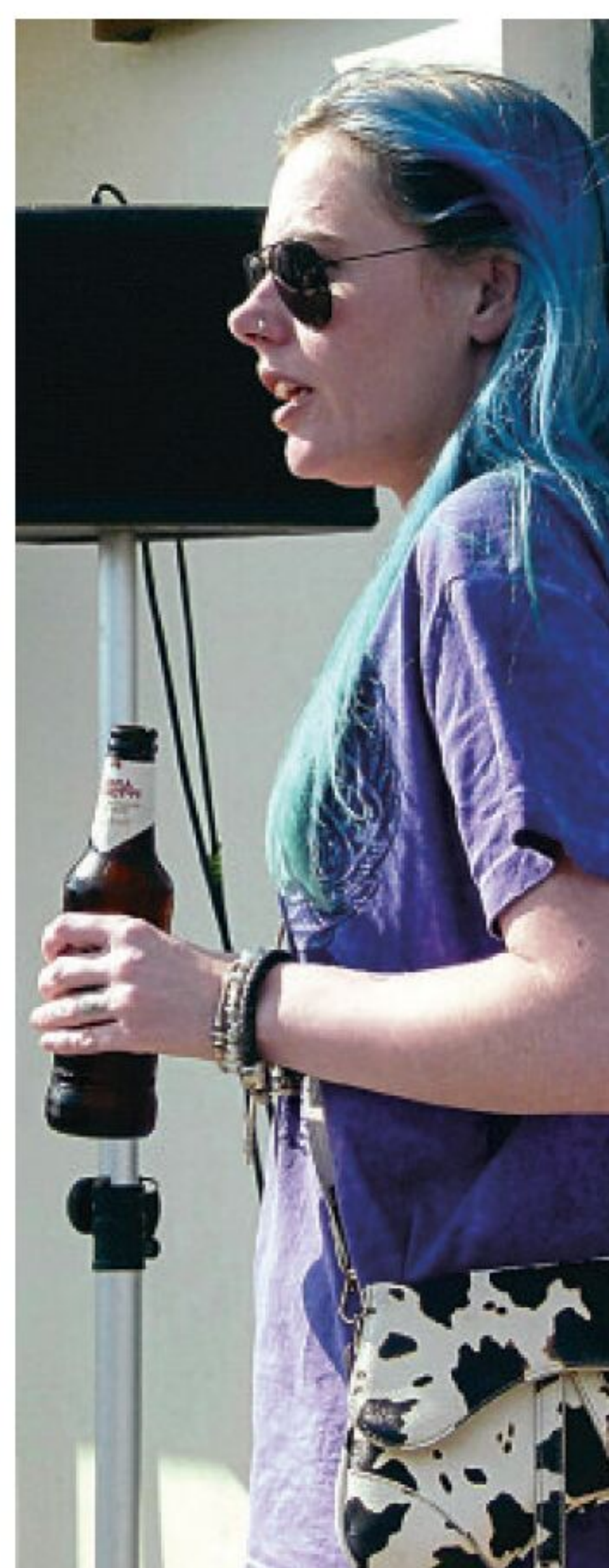
hile some planned events went off to pubs and farms, the Wabbits found another social club not too far away in Fishbourne (not far from the Roman villa), made a slight change to the date, and all systems were go! Thankfully, there were no worries about finding the venue, as there were great direction signs to

a village hall tucked away down a tiny lane. A quick hello at the gate, and I was directed to park my faithful steed on an already packed field, not far from Layla and April's stunning chops (Layla later picked up the award for Best Chop).

I've always liked the Wabbits as they're very much a social club with a bike habit, and also seem to turn up at many events across the south – if I was ever to join a club it'd be the one for me. The event, as

ever, had a village fete feel with lots of local stalls, and was very family-friendly, and the club provided an outside bar, and BBQ, and, happily for me, an ice-cream van, too, which on a hot day was a delight.

During the afternoon a band played in the hall (no idea who they were as I'm absolutely rubbish at getting such info!), and drew a large crowd, and there was a camping area, too, for those carrying on the party in the evening.



Somehow the rat bikes, and Wayne's unique rat Ford trike, had migrated to one small area, standing out like a blemish amongst the chrome and paint – his trike later won the Best Rat trophy, and also the Bad Wabbitt Crew Trophy. A guy named Roy'd ridden down on his dad's vintage Harley, which later won a prize, but I'm not so sure he's mastered the starting of it yet – he certainly needs some tips from his dad, but it made

for a good spectator sport. Oh, and the stunning BSA A65 you may've seen in the P&D Customs show a couple of months ago was on its first outing (BSH time travels, y'see) with its new black n' copper accent paint job, courtesy of Stig, and won Best Engineering. There were a handful of scooters including a smart levellers-themed Lambretta chop which had many chatting about, especially Nick and Co. from the Musos

who've played with the band. Arriving just too late for judging was a great tribute to the American Air Force, but for me the one bike I'd've ridden home was the blue '47 BSA which was just begging for it (if you'll pardon the vernacular).

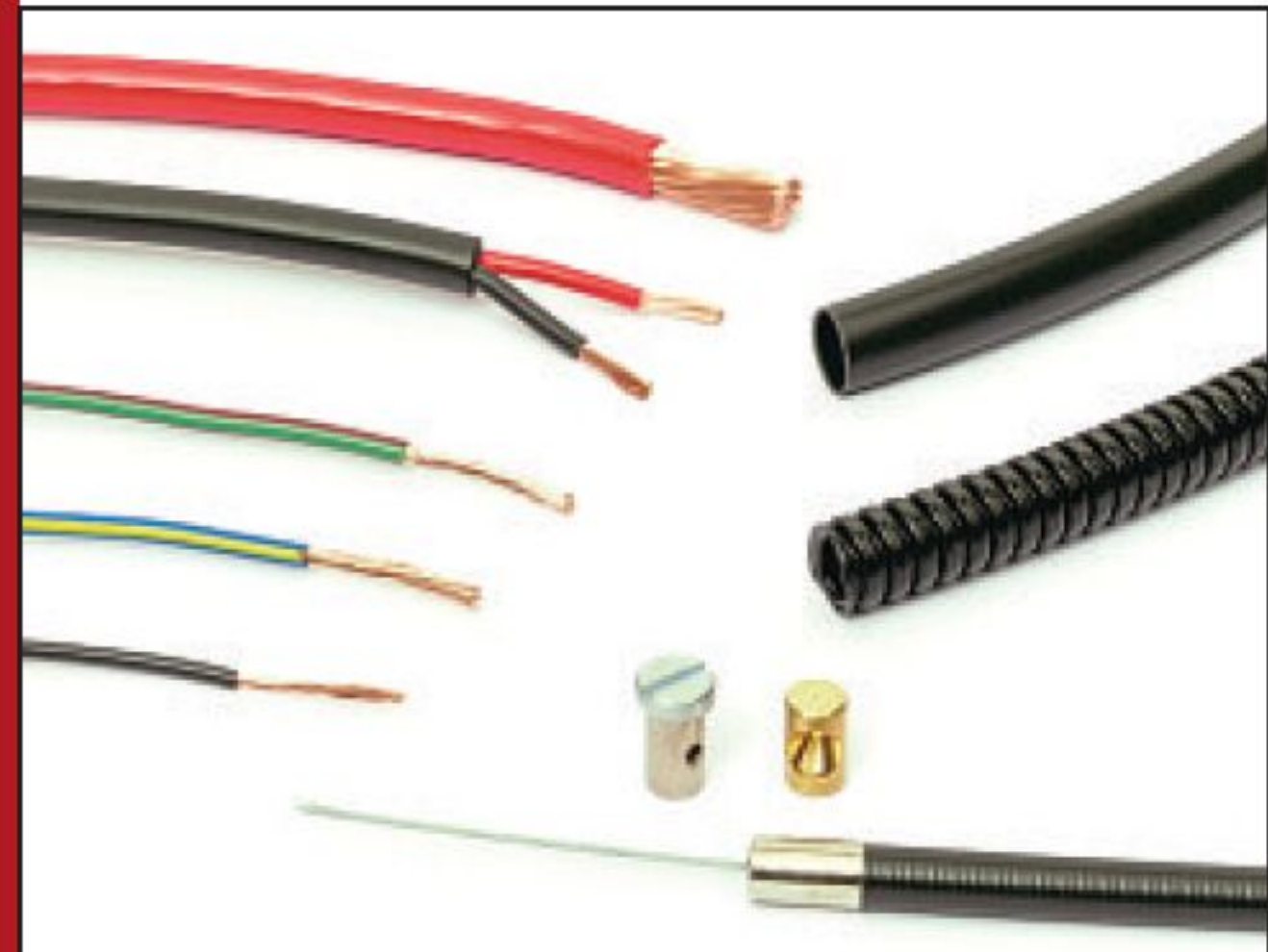
Another fab day, and I believe they're holding another this year, too. As soon as the info' arrives we'll let you know. 🏍️

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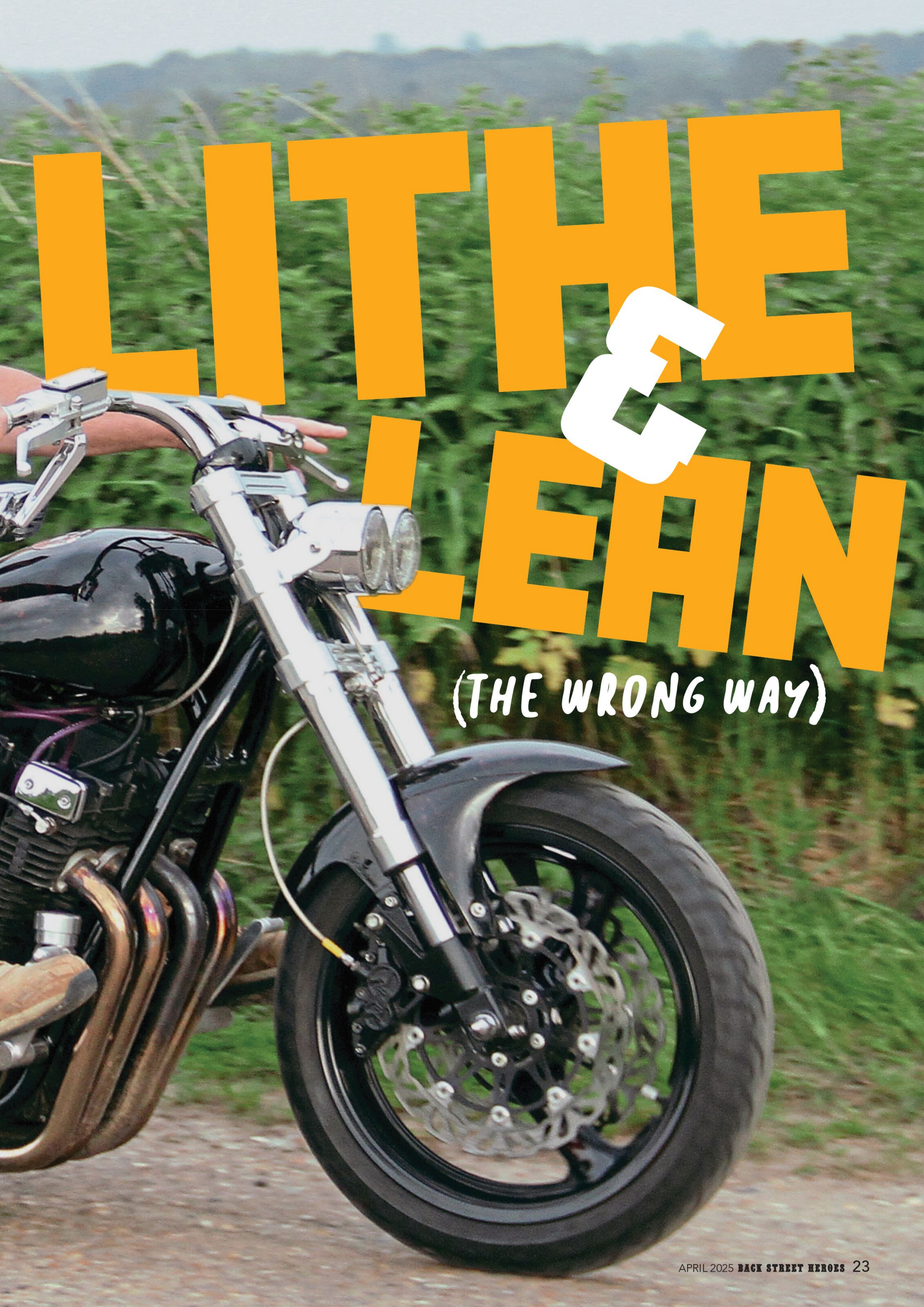
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THE BIKE YOU'RE
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MARTIN 'DUNNY'
DUNNING'S GSX
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APPEARANCES, A
NEWLY FINISHED
BUILD. NO, IT'S
ACTUALLY NEARLY
20 YEARS OLD,
UNBELIEVABLY, AS
IT WAS FINISHED
AND FIRST MOT'D
IN THIS FORM
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QUITE INCREDIBLE
AS IT LOOKS LIKE
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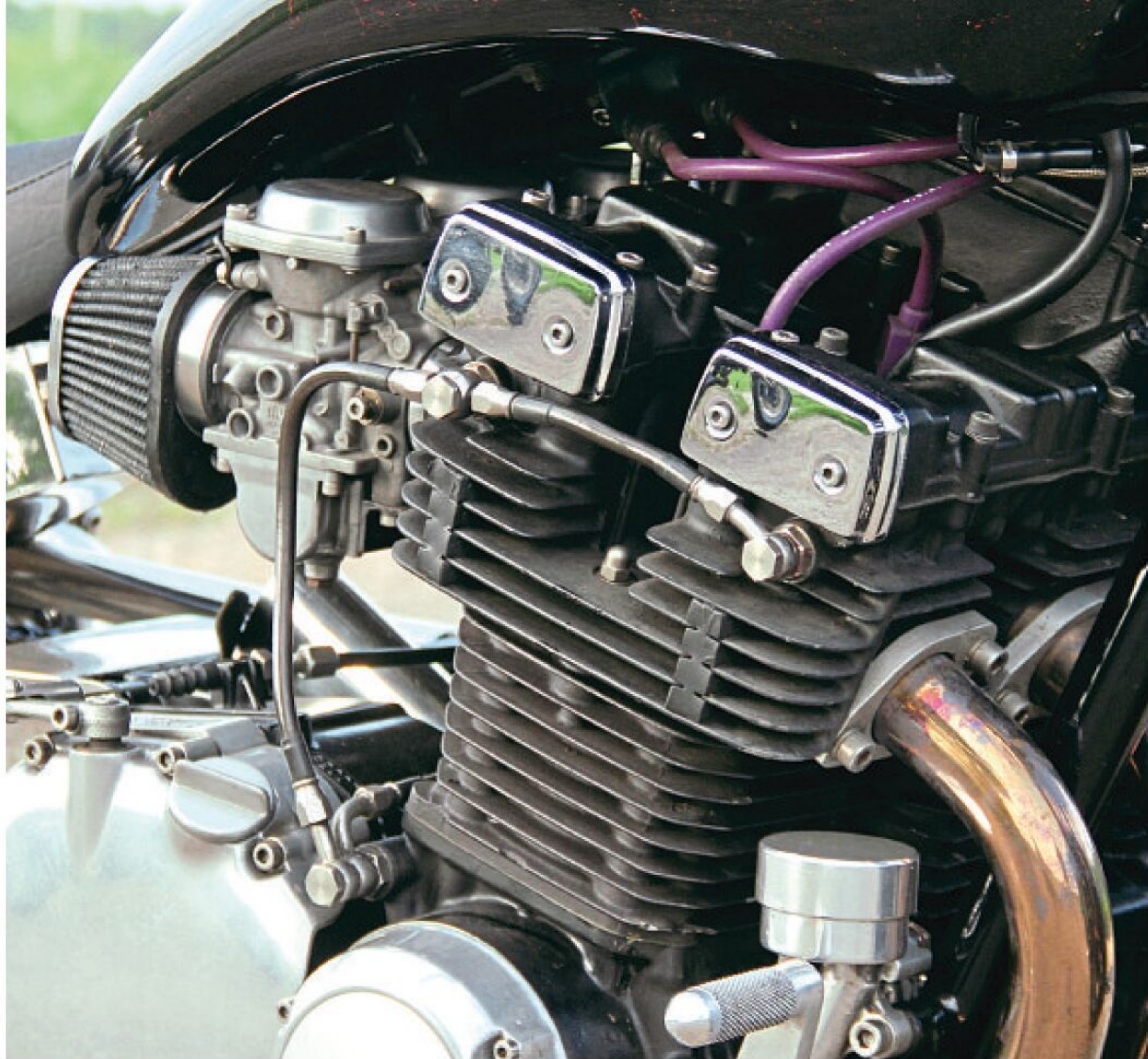


LITTLE LEAN

(THE WRONG WAY)







N

ormally a 20 (nearly)-year-old bike, no matter how well one looks after it, looks, after the best part of two decades, a little shabby round the edges, but it's a testament to the fact that he absolutely loves this bike and looks after it, isn't it?

Back in 2002 (on 18 December to be precise), he saw a Suzuki hardtail rolling chassis for sale and, quite fancying such a beast, spoke to his good mate Dave about coming with him to have a look at it. The pair of them set off, in an Astra van, from the wilds of the east, bound for Worcester, and when they got there, Dunny knew it was the bike for him. After stripping it apart and cramming it into the van, he and Dave drove back, Dunny all excited about his new project. "Little did I know," he says, "how much time and money over the next few years it was going to take..."

As he's a busy man and one who doesn't get that much time to himself for bike building, the plan'd always been to take it to Chris Sadd of CS Engineering in Norwich – a man whose name might be familiar to you if you're a Streetfighters reader of yore as he built a rather spiffing Katana that was featured in a very early issue of that late, lamented organ. His is a small workshop on the outskirts of the country's most easternmost city where, for many years, he's quietly been doing quality engineering and earning himself a very good reputation as he does so. The only problem with good engineers, as I'm sure you know, is that because they're good they often have a waiting list and Chris is no exception to that – he couldn't get the GSX in straightaway, but he put Dunny's name on the list and told him he'd ring him when he had space.

Time passed frustratingly slowly, as it always does when you're waiting for something good, but eventually he got the call, and the GSX was trucked (well, vanned) up to the bright lights of the big city. It was unloaded into the workshop and then, as is completely normal with any bike build, the two of them stood there and looked at it long and hard. Dunny had some ideas, you see – he wanted big, wide 'bars, and to run the exhaust(s) around the back of the battery box, up through the frame, and out between the top and bottom runs of the chain – a routing I don't think I've seen before. This was, he knew as he asked for it, going to be a challenge for Chris but, as you can see, one he pulled off expertly. He also wanted a push-button quick-shifter, but one that wasn't really visible, and that, too, was doable, but'd throw up a problem later... well, actually, more than one problem as it turns out, but we'll get to that in a minute.

Over the next few months Chris threw problems and questions at Dunny as and when they arose, all of which were dealt with swiftly, and Dunny's next job was to source the billet handlebar controls, and brake n' clutch levers – he went over to Black Bear H-D in Newmarket and spent far too long looking through their various catalogues, eventually deciding on a neat set o' gizmos from GMA.

SPEC:

1979 Suzuki GSX 1100E engine (rejetted carbs, aftermarket air-filters, Orient Express Racing clutch, one-off 4-into-2 with carbon finish cans, braided external top-end oil lines, one-off 20m offset front sprocket, Dyna coils/leads)/frame (modified), one-off forwards, one-off 'wrong-side' side-stand, Dunlop Sportmax tyres (120 front, 180 rear), Suzuki GSX-R 750L 17-inch three-spoke wheels/forks/calipers (front/rear)/front mudguard, aftermarket wavy discs (front/rear), one-off yokes, Goodridge brake lines, one-off 'bars, GMA master-cylinders/controls/switches, one-off alloy grips, one-off internal throttles, one-off headlight clamps, aftermarket custom tank with twin flush-fit fillers, one-off seat, one-off moulded rear mudguard, one-off stainless battery/electrics boxes, one-off engine-mounted ignition housing, one-off side-mount, one-off rear brake master-cylinder, one-off rear brake master-cylinder reservoir, one-off loom, aftermarket twin headlights, aftermarket tail-light

FINISH:

Black & mottled red tank/mudguards/wheels by previous owner, frame filled/painted by Pageant Paintwork (www.pageantpaintwork.co.uk), all one-off alloy/stainless parts polished by CS Engineering, chainguards/brake pot/engine cases by owner

ENGINEERING:

Bike built & all work by Chris Sadd at CS Engineering (01603 414666 or Facebook)

THANKS TO:

"Massive thanks to Chris for all his time, patience, fantastic engineering skills, attention to detail, & taking my ideas & taking them to another level; Ty at Pageant for filling/painting the frame; & Mr David Webb for introducing me to Chris in the first place..."

He says his credit card took a bit of a pounding for 'em, but they set the wide, wide bars off a treat. Chris also made an internal throttle set up for 'em, hiding away all the cabling for it, the switches, and the master-cylinder nicely.

As with all things that look simple, there's a massive amount of almost unseen work gone on. As well as the very obvious larger items, the footrests and forward controls've been made out of alloy with a knurled finish and domed ends, and they match the grips, and the ends of the axles, and the brackets for the headlights and the speedo and housing are so subtle as to be unobtrusive, as is the little housing a'front the battery box that holds the ignition. Similarly, the number plate holder's a one-off made to fit a plate on the rear axle with a recess with wire grooves on the back to get the cabling up there unobtrusively. Clever.

Remember that quick-shifter, and how I said it was going to cause problems? Well, apart from not working as well as he'd hoped, and so being later disconnected, the very neat cover for it took up the space where, on any other bike, the side-stand'd go. Both Chris and Dunny thought and thought and thought, and both came to the conclusion it'd have to go on t'other side, hence the reason the GSX's one of very few in the land that leans the wrong way.

Finally, after many, many hours of work, it was dry-built, and had to be torn apart again to get the frame filled and painted – the wheels and bodywork, y'see, had been done really nicely by the previous owner in a black and mottled red, and were fine, but the frame'd been welded so it was taken to the venerable Ty at Pageant Paint at Snetterton (yep, where the racetrack is) to be smoothed and painted, and then Chris could start putting it back together again.

In July 2005 it passed its MOT and, at last, Duny could really ride it. "What a stance," he says, "and a presence to be proud of. She even rides and handles well – you need to be careful on roundabouts, though, with the solid footpegs, it does get interesting!" There were a few minor, if bloody annoying, teething problems, but an epic ride back from the North West 200 in Ireland saw him and another mate, also on a rigid, leading the way at a constant 85-90... well, until another mate's Harley broke near Newmarket anyway. The Suzuki, though, proved

itself splendidly, and has continued to do so ever since.

Last words to Dunny: "Riding the rigid, it still puts a smile on my face, and it still turns heads even today, so it's been so worth all the tears, sweat, time and money, and to me it's something precious – no one else'll ever have another one like it. KEEP IT RIGID!" 🏍️

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Event

WORSHIP MOTO SHOW

LET'S GET ONE THING STRAIGHT RIGHT AWAY – WORSHIP IS NOT A STREETFIGHTER SHOW. YES, ALL THE BIKES IN ARE/WERE THE SORT OF THINGS THAT'D'VE BEEN FEATURED IN THE LATE, LAMENTED STREETFIGHTERS MAGAZINE, THAT'S TRUE, AND ANYONE SEEING ONE OF THEM PARKED ANYWHERE ELSE'D PROBABLY IMMEDIATELY SEE IT AS A STREETFIGHTER, BUT WORSHIP IS, CATEGORICALLY, NOT A STREETFIGHTER SHOW, OKAY?





H

eld inside a deconsecrated church called Left Bank Leeds in, unsurprisingly, Leeds, it was probably the most impossibly cool venue for a motorcycle show of any genre anywhere, and was therefore exclusively invite-only (you had to apply in advance) as, both internally and externally, there wasn't a huge amount of room. Each bike was displayed on a low plaque borrowed from The Bike Shed Show and, nicely, provided with a small, movable LED spotlight that owners could position to show off their creation to its best effect (a very neat touch) and while, just like at The Bike Shed Show, nothing was roped off, people took great care as they moved between the machines. There almost seemed to be an air of reverence about the place, possibly because it was in a church, deconsecrated or not, with people talking in perhaps lower voices than normal? I dunno, maybe I imagined it, but...





What it very definitely was was an homage (as in the French pronunciation without the 'h' and in an accent so thick you could slice snails with it) to the performance custom; the place was positively awash with exotic trick-framed bikes, turbocharged bikes, high-end retromods (as I believe they're called these days) – the sort of bikes that, to misquote the late, great Edward Turner of Triumph Motorcycles fame, look like they're doing 150mph standing still. I don't think I've ever seen so many Spondons in one place, or as many half- and fully-faired GSX-R specials, absolutely glorious endurance race-styled Z-series Kawasakis, bikes with upside-

down forks that were never intended to have them, deep-braced swingarms, etc. It was an event dedicated to the goal of producing the most, to quote the seminal Aussie biker cartoon Fred Gassit, f**koffingest motorcycles in the land, most definitely.

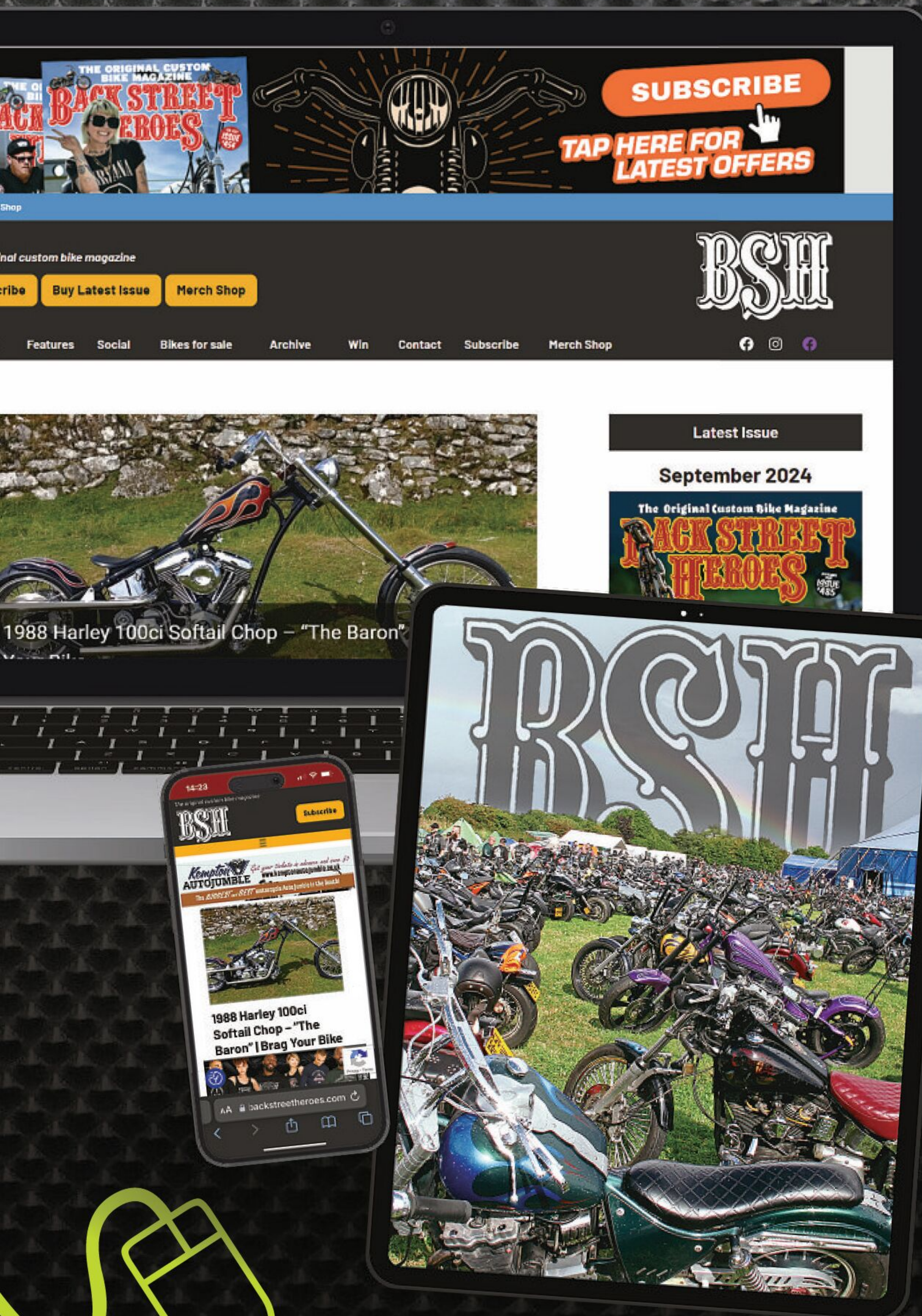
Interestingly, I got talking to a gentleman whose name escapes me, who has some of the old Spondon jigs from the '90s in his workshop, and he looked long and hard at the frame of my trick-frame Bandit (as featured in BSH 486 last year) and opined that the rear section, around the swingarm pivot in particular, looked exactly as if it'd've come off one of Sweary Bob

(gawd rest his soul)'s jigs (the front's been modified at some later date, I know). Hmm, do I have a Spondon? Possibly...

Anyway, the event was more a display than a show but, Gary 'Sideburn' Inman, the organiser, picked the satin black Spondon turbo as what would've won had there been a show – a sentiment agreed with by most, I think (although the grey RCD Kwak was my personal favourite).

The event is on again this year, at the same place, but a little later in the year (28 September), and you can enter or get more information from the website at www.worshipmotoshow.com or through their socials on Facebook and Insta'. 🏍️

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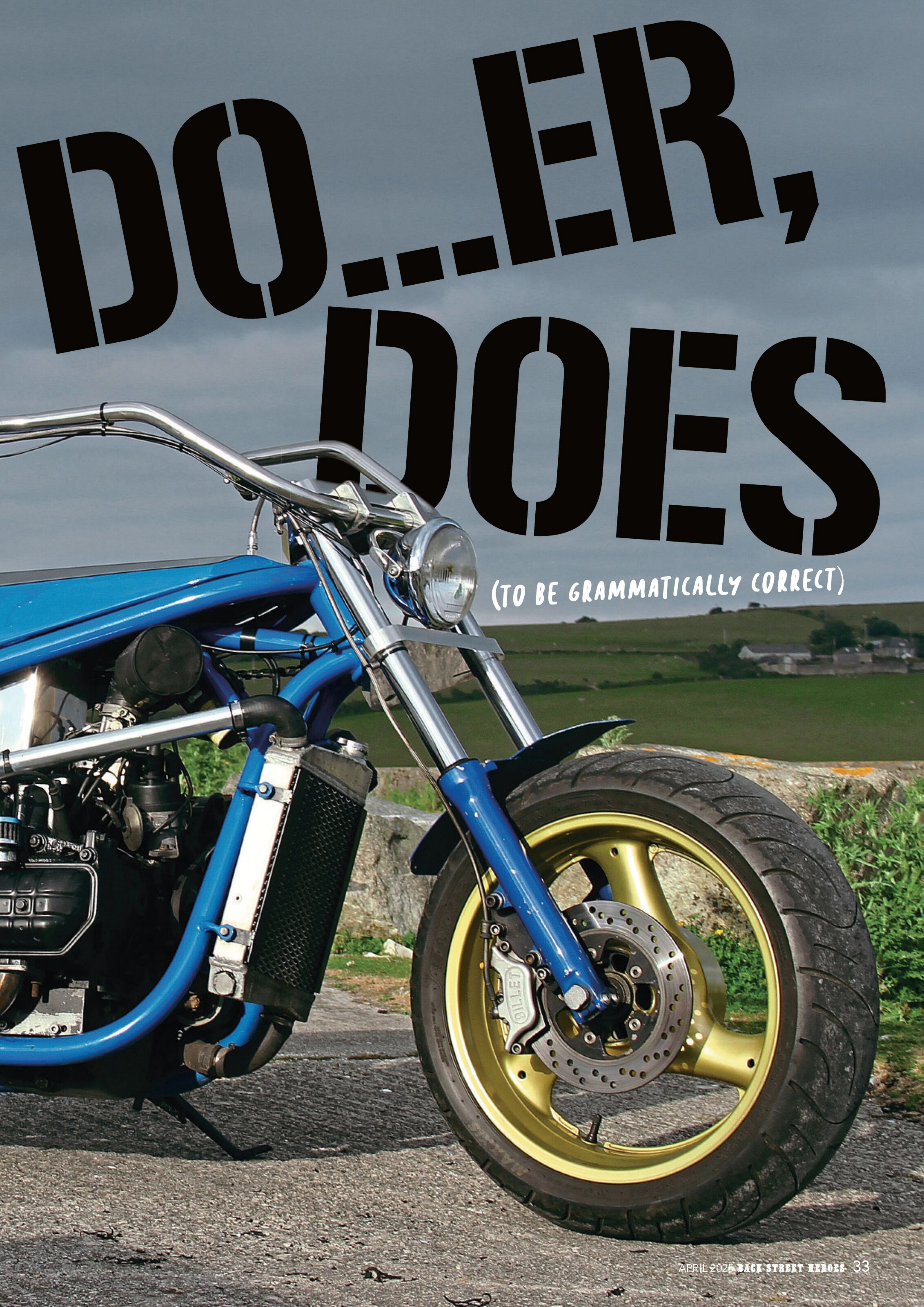
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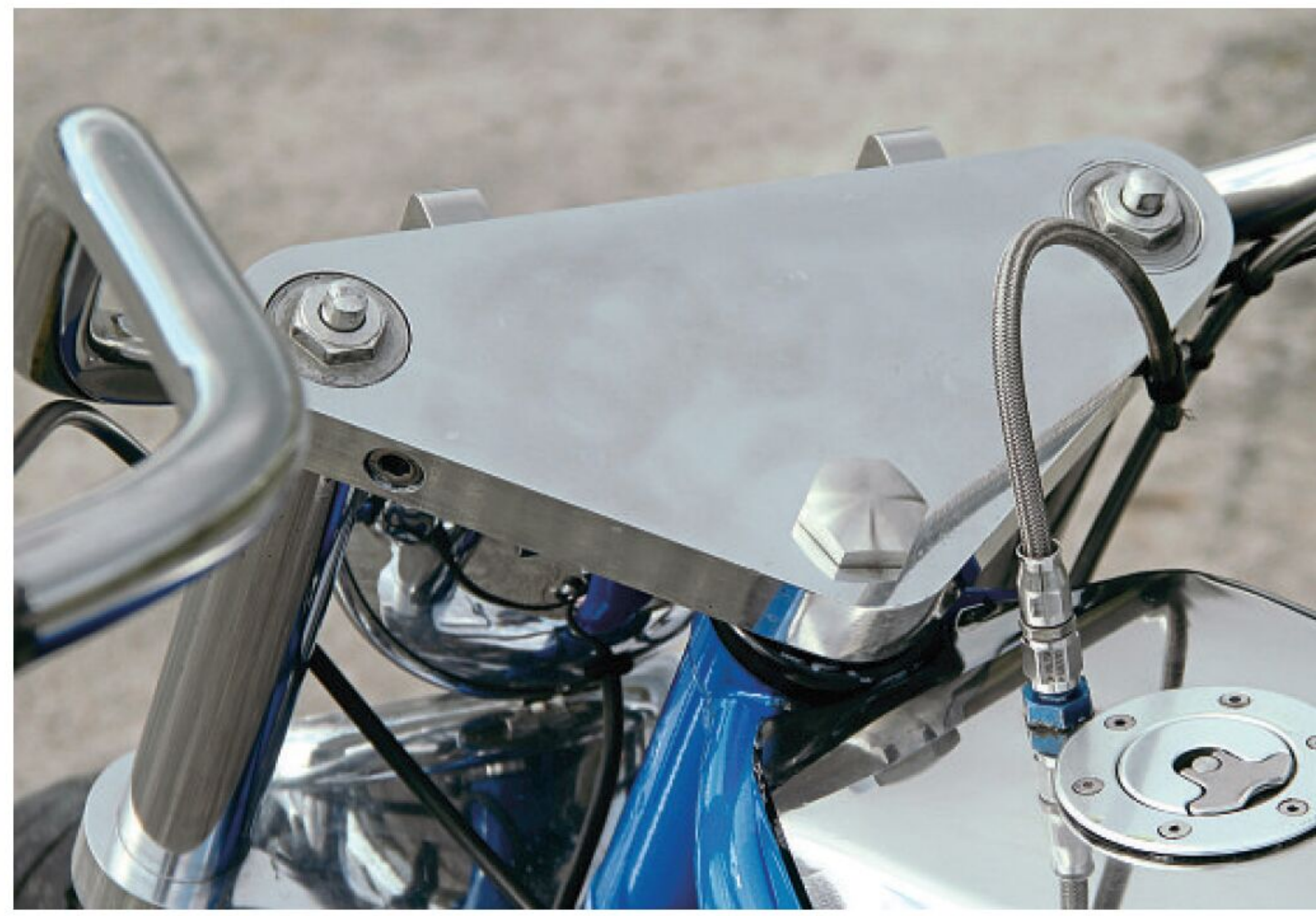




DO...ER, DOES

(TO BE GRAMMATICALLY CORRECT)







N

ow, before you start getting all excited, no, it's not built from the engine from a genuine 300-plus horsepower WRC car, as driven by just about every big name in rallying back in the day (Colin McRae, Carlos Sainz, Petter Solberg and Juha Kankkunen among them) because... well, can you

imagine, just imagine, how dear one of those motors, assuming you could even get one, would be? It was built originally using a 1600cc motor, but was change... look, I'll just tell you the tale from the beginning, shall I?

According to Paul, "a long time ago, in the far South West of England, lived a big bloke with not much money... well, not enough money to buy a GSX-R1100 as his next donor bike anyway." As he was bemoaning this fact, and considering other engines, a so-called mate came out with "Being a fat b*st*rd you need a big Jap four" (friends, eh, who needs 'em) and, once he'd resisted the urge to stick one on him, it got Paul thinking about the possibility of using a car engine.

Now, there have been car-engined bikes before, of course, but they've tended to be a bit 'rat' – car engines're difficult to make look pretty, and they're big, heavy units, and don't lend themselves to creating nice custom bikes around, but after a discussion with Howard (now of B&H Motorcycles), the list was whittled down to either an Alfa Romeo or a Subaru flat-four engine as they're (a) all alloy, which'd keep the overall weight down, and (b) smaller than a conventional engine, too. A bit more research revealed that the Alfas, being OHC, were too wide, but an OHV Subaru'd do the job nicely. One was found in a local scrapyard, started to make sure there wasn't any smoke or rattles, and removed with the aid of an angle-grinder. Now he had the required engine n' gearbox, all he had to do was find someone mad enough (and capable enough obviously) to take on the challenge of building the bike that'd taken shape in his head.

At the time Mo (whose uber-long and wide Harley was in the last issue) was having a trike built by Dale at Hellstown Choppers in Helston, so Paul went along to see him and, after much discussion, a trailer full of bits was taken down to his workshop. What they agreed on was a very unconventional bike – a narrow, big-tube,

SPEC:

Subaru EA81 flat-four 1800cc engine (all crap removed, aftermarket fuel pump, rejetted carb, K&N air-filter, modified Subaru 2wd gearbox, one-off hand & foot clutch arrangement, one-off two-inch stainless exhausts, one-off 43-tooth front sprocket, one-off radiator surround), one-off single sided hardtail frame, one-off stainless mid-mount 'pegs/controls, Suzuki GSX-R 1100 rear wheel as front/brake disc, Harrison Billet Four front brake caliper, Suzuki RG250 fork bottoms, Yamaha XT600 fork stanchions, one-off yokes, Goodridge stainless brake lines, one-off stainless handlebars, unknown trail bike front master-cylinder, generic controls/levers, GPS speedo in one-off fork dust-cover surround, aftermarket grips, one-off small front mudguard, one-off stainless petrol tank, one-off fibreglass seat base (foam/cover by Ernie from Egypt), one-off stainless battery/electrics/switchgear box, one-off alloy side-mount 'plate, Subaru Legacy rear wheel, Ford Granada Mk2 stub axle, Kawasaki KLR600 rear disc/caliper, unknown rear master-cylinder, 38-tooth rear sprocket, 200x15 rear tyre, one-off loom, Bates-style headlight, one-off rear light

FINISH:

Subaru blue/gold colour scheme, powder-coated frame, polishing by owner

ENGINEERING:

Bike built & most work by Hellstown Choppers (07973 864995 or Facebook), stainless battery box & alloy side-mount by owner, wiring by Jon & owner

THANKS TO:

"Dale at Hellstown Choppers for making my crazy ideas into reality; Ernie for the seat; Jon for help with wiring; Sarah for putting up with all the shit during the build; Scotty; & NCC Kernow for all their help along the way..."

single-sided hardtail with a car back wheel, no gusset plates (all strength coming from the torsional stiffness of the larger tube, and triangulation), no 'bar risers ('bars mounted under the top yoke to give a clean look), footrests through the frame (not bolted to a plate welded to it), and more. Dale set to, and Paul continued rounding up parts for it.

After a number of visits to get the sizing and style right (he said, blithely glossing over what was a long and complicated build), the bike was done and was taken home. It was in a bare-metal, dry-build state, and so, to shake it down, it was rattle-canned in Mr Halfords' finest gloss black, and was ridden to the NCC 25th Anniversary Run. A couple of problems arose. Firstly, it turned out the carb needed to be fed by a fuel pump, as just using gravity wasn't enough (it could only get up to 50mph before the carb starved itself), and, secondly, the hand-clutch got too heavy very quickly when stuck in traffic. They managed to find and fit an electric fuel pump which sorted the fuelling, but nothing could be done about the clutch 'til the bike was back in Cornwall. Dale made a clever foot-operated, cable-using pedal to deal with the problem when it arose, and now the bike runs a dual, hand and foot, system.

With a few miles under its belt, and the mechanical glitches sorted, it was pulled apart for paint (a scheme using traditional Subaru blue and gold), and all was well in the world. Then, at the following Easter Run, another issue raised its head – the engine was overheating, and using loads of oil. It turned out the scrapyard motor was completely worn out but, it turns out, finding another 1600cc OHV Scooby was worse than trying to find rocking horse sh*t. Newer 1800 OHVs were plentiful though, but the 1600s gearbox didn't fit the 1800, and a lot of the 18s're four-wheel-drive, so he had to find a rare 2WD gearbox (sourced, eventually, from far-off Lincolnshire). The diff' had to be split and welded up, and the driveshaft machined to take a sprocket (a 42-tooth front/37-tooth rear to get the gearing for the bigger engine right – the chain's now 180 links long), but it was soon in the frame and back on the road.

The Scooby's now had over 27 years on the road, and has had a couple of rebuilds for various reasons (the most recent, for the 2024 season, was to replace the crank rear oil seal, which meant taking everything off and out to get to it), mainly 'cos it's a Club bike and gets used a lot. People, he says, always ask him how it handles, and his standard answer is: "How do you think?" – it's a big bike with a car motor and back wheel, isn't it? In fact, it handles surprisingly well ("probably due to Dale knowing a thing or two about how to build a frame rather than just making it look right"), but it is an absolute handful to ride... "Slick gear changes don't happen as having to use both the hand and foot clutch together, and the hand gearshift, makes for an interesting combination, but she'll sit at 80mph all day, and gives above 50mpg." And looks the absolute nuts, too, of course. 🍌

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Event

COPDOCK MOTORCYCLE SHOW

YES, YES, I KNOW THAT, OFFICIALLY, THE COPDOCK MOTORCYCLE SHOW, OR JUST COPDOCK AS US 'ERE IN THE EAST CALL IT, IS NOW CALLED THE EAST ANGLIAN COPDOCK BIKE SHOW, BUT THAT'S SUCH A CLUMSY NAME I'LL SWEAR YOU ALL AS HONORARY EASTERNERS, AND BETWEEN US WE'LL JUST CALL IT COPDOCK, EH?



A

nyway, it's been a few years since I last went, probably not since they moved it from its traditional date in early October to, now, the first weekend in September. I get why they moved it (the weather's better at the beginning of September

than it is at the beginning of October), but the first weekend in September's a much busier date on the biker calendar, and I've always had summat else to do.

Held at Trinity Park just outside the county town of Suffolk, Ipswich, Copdock's now a fairly massive deal, held over two days, but with the main day being the Sunday. It's spread out over the whole site, with a massive autojumble; a sizeable traders' village; a field for a moped endurance race and another for Motoball and other motorcycularised events; a Wall of Death; an avenue of club stands; a huge indoor hall of classics and specials; and, of course, the custom show dedicated to the late Roo Hall, whose idea it was years ago.

Arranged in a couple of long marquees in an L-shape, with a huge stand by Xtreme Paint Studio at one end, and stands by Raw Steel Choppers and seat specialists East County Customs inside, it was packed with custom bikes, some conventional and some quirky. The two Ducati-framed Brit bikes, one a Triumph, one a J.A.P., were inspired; and the lil' black n' white flames XS650 owned by one of NCC Suffolk just perfect; Richie's stripped-down CBX oozed attitude; the red big-tube Polygon was v. nice; and Graham's across-the-frame Crusader-paint H-D as in-ye-face as ever. Outside, the trikes gained many admiring looks, especially the V-Max, but for me the ultra-painted H-D 'un on Xtreme's stand was the best three-wheeler by far. Perhaps foolishly the organisers'd asked me to help judge the show, and I plumped, for overall honours, the completely handbuilt 125 Shadow hardtail which, yes, wasn't the most bling thing there, but'd been handmade, at home, by the owner using very, very few off-the-shelf parts as, well, no one makes 'em for 125 Shadow choppers, do they?

Elsewhere, the El Lobo twin-shock Shovel (in the classics hall, oddly) was sublime, and it was good to see Phil Cotton and his cover star Goose replica Kwak giving it what for around the stunt arena – that bike sounds like the very Devil himself! Vandal and Toddy, and Trina, from The Two Brothers Stunt Team, did a number of crowd-pleasing smoky shows, and Dangerous Steve performed flaming torch juggling aboard his motorised unicycle, blindfolded ramp jumping, and roll-overs on his monowheel to a slightly nonplussed audience who, I'm guessing, had no idea of the levels of skill needed to do such. I thoroughly enjoyed watching how effortless he made his tricks look, meself.

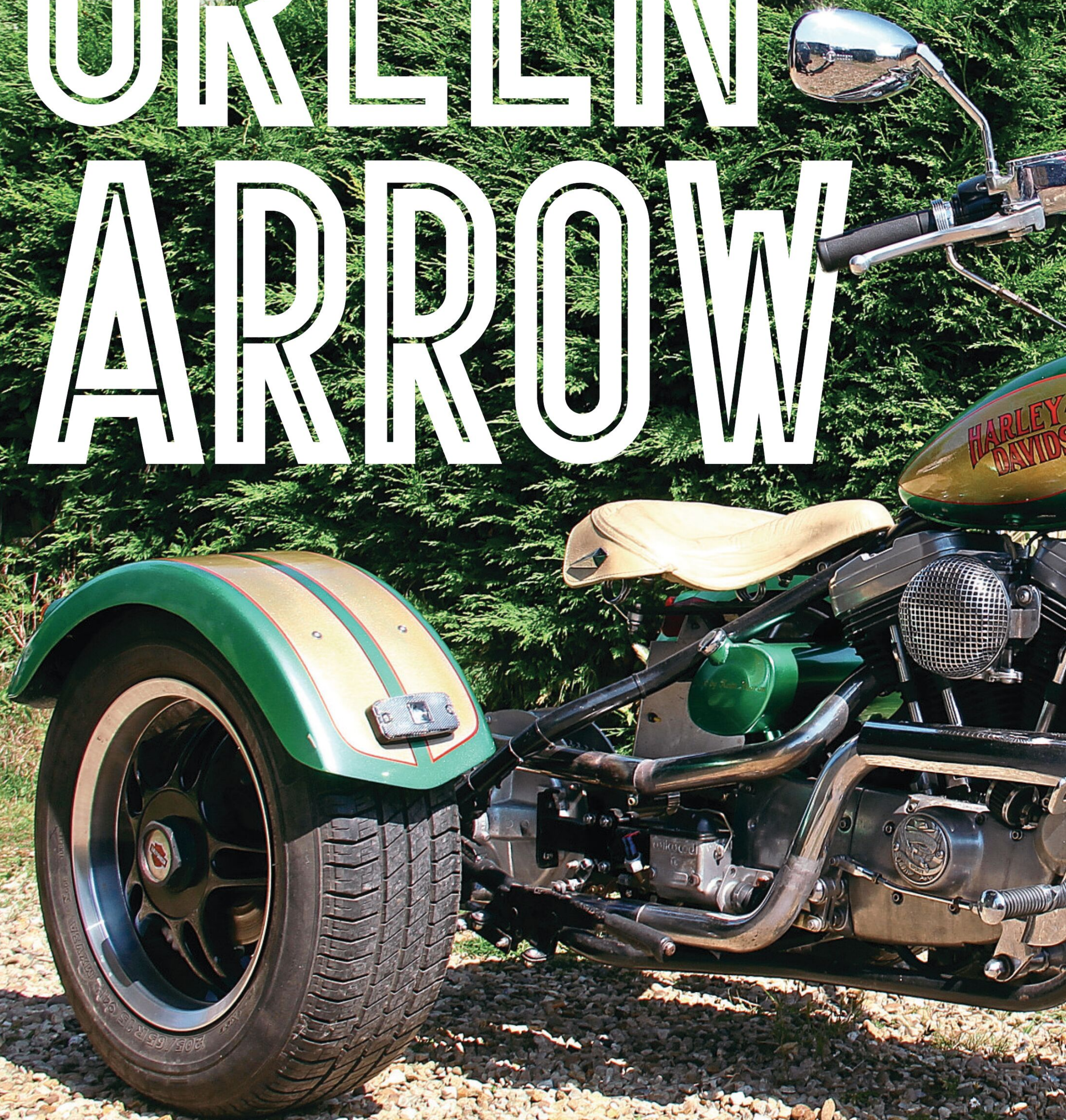
All day long the sun beat down, and it was with very great reluctance that I had to turn down the numerous beers I was offered as I wandered the club stands avenue. NCC Suffolk and Essex had stands showing off their bikes (can't help thinking they should've been in the custom area?), as did a whole host of local clubs, and I was quite taken by the rather lovely Lawson-themed Z1300, the MZ streamliner, the tiny Suzuki GAG, and the wonderful old two-speed Scott remarkably similar to the one I rode on a track at a VMCC event years ago, scraping the 'pegs through the corners and grinning like a loon (when I came in, the owner congratulated me on being the first person to ride his bike properly, shortly before he revealed he'd recently turned down an offer of £60,000 for it...).

Anyway, this year's Copdock... sorry, sorry, East Anglian Copdock Bike Show's going to be held over the weekend of 6-7 September, at the same place, and you can get more info' from www.eacbikeshow.co.uk

NIK

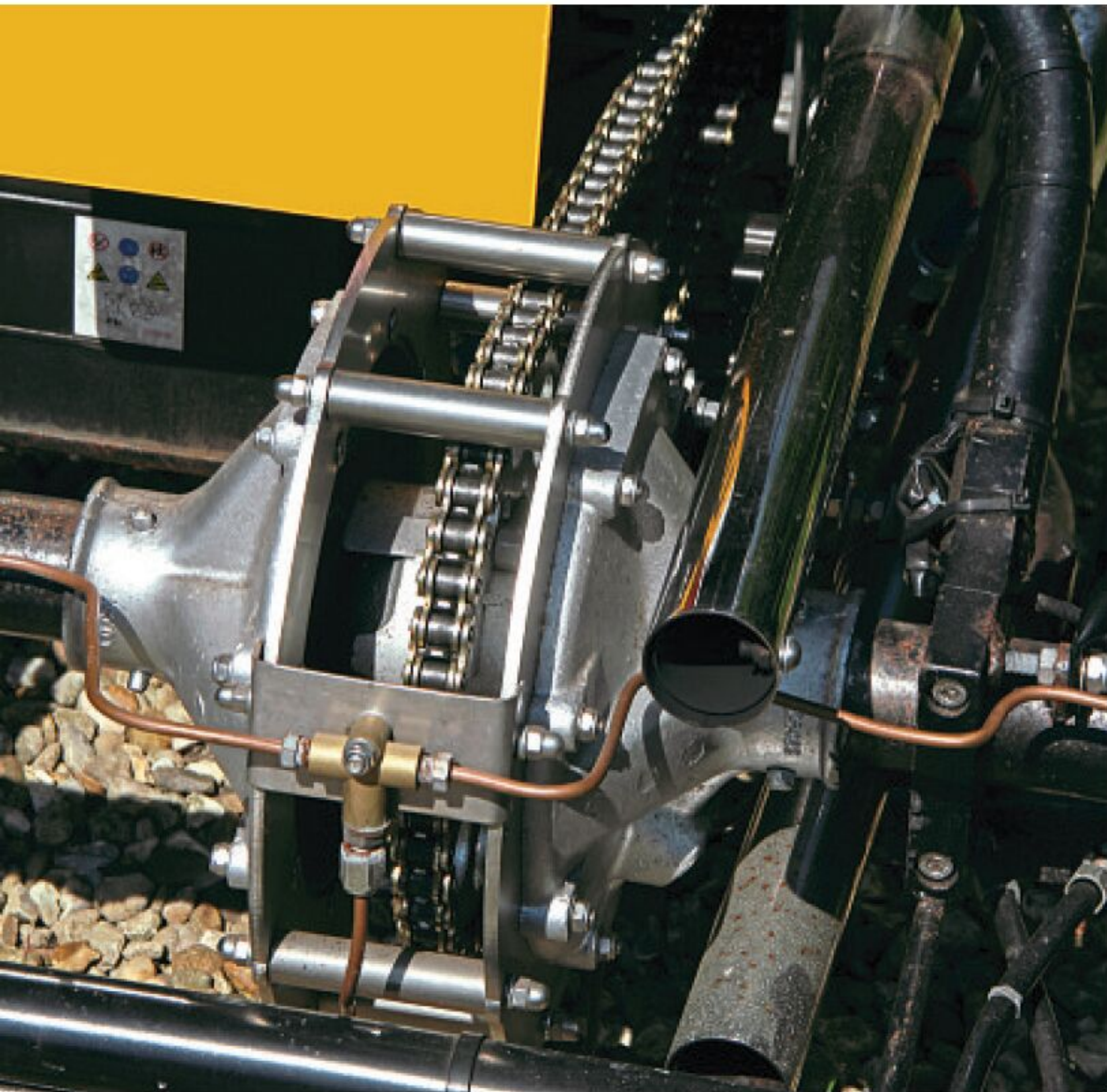


GREEN ARROW



HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED THAT A LOT OF THE EVERYDAY PEOPLE, THE NON-SUPERHEROES IF YOU LIKE, IN THE DC COMICS 'MULTIVERSE' ARE JUST A WEE BIT, I DON'T KNOW, DIM? I MEAN, SUPERMAN'S SECRET IDENTITY'S PROTECTED FROM THE WORLD BY JUST A PAIR OF GLASSES, AND NUMEROUS OTHER CHARACTERS WEAR MASKS SO MINIMAL IT'S BLATANTLY OBVIOUS WHO THEY ARE, YET NO ONE EVER SAYS "'ERE, 'AVE YOU NOTICED THAT (INSERT CHARACTER'S NAME HERE) DUN 'ALF LOOK LIKE (INSERT SECRET IDENTITY'S NAME HERE) IN A MASK", DO THEY?







K

Keith M, from over on the Lincolnshire/Norfolk border, has named his rather nice home-built Sportster trike after the archer Green Arrow because he, himself, is something of a maestro with a bit o' bent yew n' pointy feathered sticks, but I'm fairly sure that, if I was to see him wearing a mask that just

covered his eyes getting off his trike, I'd think: 'Oh, there's Keith in a mask' and not 'Blurry 'ell, some masked bugger's nicked Keith's trike!' y'know? Weird concept, isn't it?

He's no stranger to three wheels, nor two either, as over the years he's had four of them. The first was an over-bored 820cc 750/4 with a Desperate Dan's back end, called 'Still Got the Blues' (the trike, obviously, not the back end – I don't know what that was called); then he had a 1600VW; then this Harley; and he currently also has a purple Hinckley Trident 900. Due to, like a lot of us these days not being quite as young as we were, he tends to ride the Triumph more as it's a sprung trike and so is a little easier on him than the hardtail Harley, but the Sporty still makes it to various local bike nights and shows and, indeed, picked up the Best Trike award at the East Coast Harley Club's Kings Lynn show last year (as detailed by our own Lauren).

It's not a new build either; he'd been collecting parts for such a creation for a wee while before. In 2017 he went to see the late Hard Up Choppers to commission the goosenecked hardtail. "I told the guy what I needed, angles, gooseneck, brackets, etc., and he made it to my spec... I believe it may've been his first Harley frame?" With it back, and them having done such a good job, all he really had to do was put it all together ("All," he says... bloody journos).

He'd bought a 1989 883 Sporty as a base for the project and, very sensibly, used large chunks of it pretty much as was to save time, effort, and costs; the motor's pretty much as the two Davidson bruvvers (an' the other bloke)'s lot intended bar a rather nice 'bug-eye' air-filter housing, and a set of homemade high n' low zorst pipes, and pretty much the whole front end (wheel/brakes/forks/yokes/riser/controls/switches/speedo) is, too. He's a huge fan of eBay, and has become a dab hand at spotting stuff that other people haven't bid on, and so picked up the twin-cap Mustang tank, the genuine (not a copy) Bates headlight ("No one was bidding on it so I got it for a song"), the oval oil tank, the LED rear lights, rear mudguards, and a veritable host of bits and bobs he needed very cheaply. He also saved himself a fortune by making his own chain-drive diff, at home, in his garage, using Reliant housings and half-shafts, and getting a couple of stainless extension plates made up by a friend, Mark Dryden at Flatlands Engineering, for a sum so paltry I won't reveal it 'cos you'll spit. The axle's been converted from drum to disc, giving far better stopping power, by using VW Golf MK11 discs and calipers, and they're operated via an AP Racing one-

SPEC:
1989 Harley-Davidson Sportster 883 engine (aftermarket air-filter, homemade exhausts)/ footrests/hangers/controls/ front end/speedo, one-off gooseneck trike frame, stainless brake lines, 1-inch stainless 'bars, aftermarket controls/switchgear/grips, aftermarket front mudguard, twin-cap Mustang tank, aftermarket oil tank, battery/ electrics in H-D Panhead tool box (modified), aftermarket rear mudguards, homemade diff, shortened right side Reliant half-shaft, unknown 15-inch alloy rear wheels, 205/15 tyres, VW Golf discs/ calipers, AP Racing 1-inch rear master-cylinder, Leyland Mini handbrake, hand-formed copper/alloy rear brake lines, one-off loom, genuine Bates headlight, aftermarket LED tail-lights/marker lights, aftermarket indicators

FINISH:
Green/gold/pin-striping by Andy Grief, Green Arrow artwork by Rick Stephenson Art (Facebook), powder-coated wheels (front by Nick Dyble, rears by Wheelrite), rear rims polished by Wheelrite

ENGINEERING:
Goosenecked hardtail frame by Hard Up Choppers, trike built & one-off head-steady & modified engine mounts by owner, 6mm stainless water-jet diff extension plates by Mark Dryden at Flatlands Engineering

THANKS TO:
"Mark Dryden; Nick Dyble for help & advice; Pete Gamble for the 'bars; & Skippy for the seat..."

inch bore rear master-cylinder, and so now bring the trike to a halt in a manner the Reliant drums never could. Tucked away neatly so that it's unobtrusive, but still reachable, is a handbrake originally intended to go on a Mini (a proper old Leyland one, not one o' these enormous German battle tanks we have these days... Mini, my arse). The rear wheels he got from Ian at Hyper Trikes across the border in Suffolk, and got them blasted and powder-coated by Wheelrite in Spalding (www.wheelrite-online.co.uk), and then added the H-D logos on the centre caps.

That rather wonderful olde-worlde seat is just that – olde-worlde. It should, really, be under the derriere of a 1957 FLH Panhead rider (the '57 was, you see, one the last models to have a rigid frame and, to help compensate for the rough ride, Harley offered a spring-style seat to try and provide a bit of comfort for the rider), but Keith got it in a deal with his mate Skippy for archery lessons... I didn't even know kangaroos did archery, let alone rode Panheads – you live and learn, eh? Another Pan donated its toolbox to be used as an electrics box (dunno if this one was ridden by a kangaroo, sorry), and a good friend, Nick Dyble, helped him with the wiring and, with that, and a set of big stainless pull-back 'bars, it was time for the ti... ahem, the bodywork to be given to a good friend, Andy, to be painted in the green n' gold you see here

and, when that was done, then to another, Rick Stephenson of Rick Stephenson Art, to have the Green Arrow mural done.

Despite the fact that, as I said, he doesn't get to ride it quite as much as he'd like, the trike is most definitely not for sale, partly because he's always wanted a Harley trike, but mostly because Mrs Keith says it's her pension fund, and no one, but no one, goes against a lady who knows what she wants, do they? Well, not if they've got any sense, anyway... 🐾

NIK

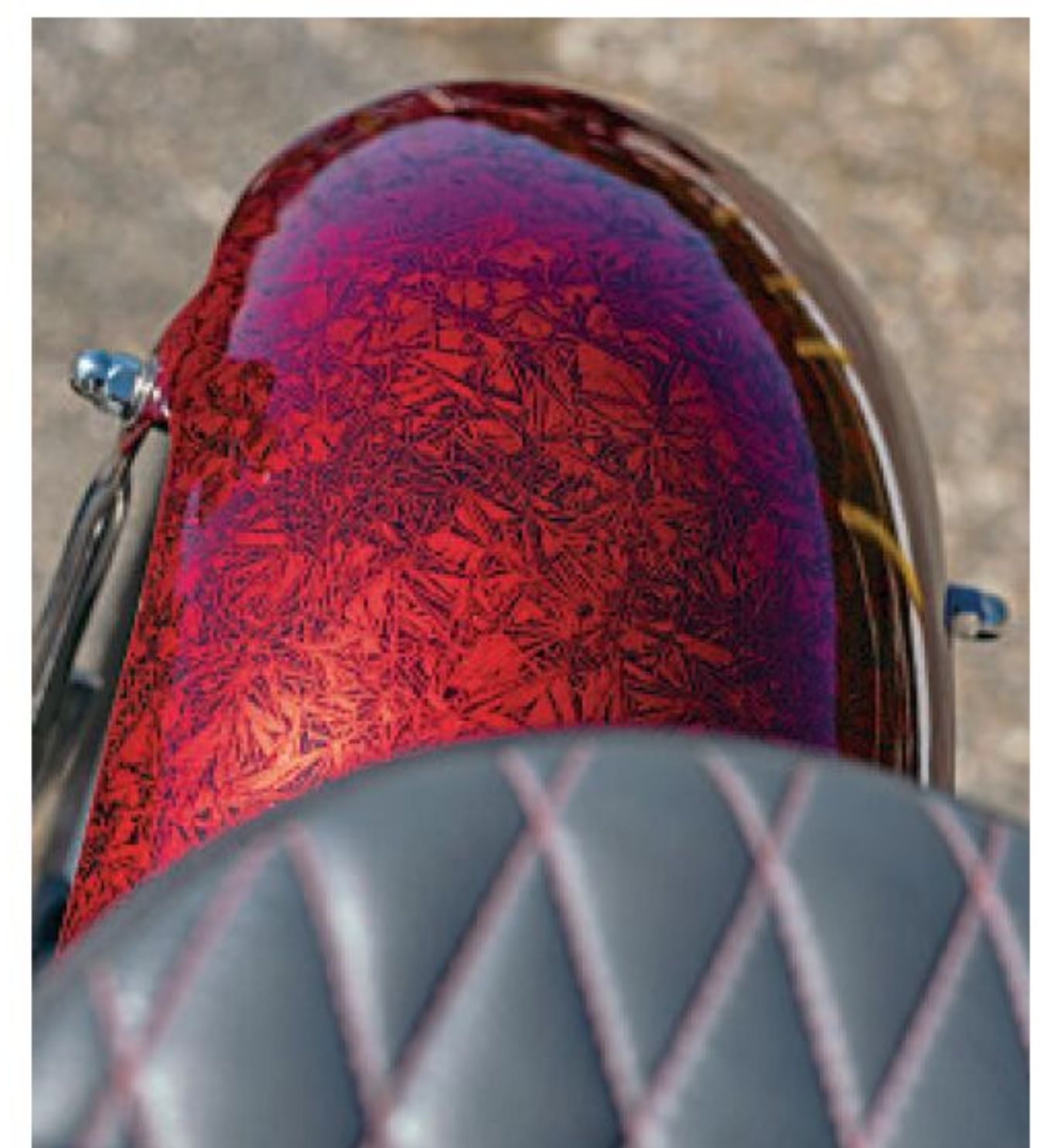
BEER BUILDS BETTER BIKES



WELL, ARGUABLY... A MORE CORRECT PHRASE'D BE 'BEER INSPIRES BETTER BIKES' COS ACTUALLY BUILDING BIKES WHEN ONE'S FULL OF BEER IS PERHAPS ONE OF THE QUICKEST WAYS TO BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH A TALL, VERY SKINNY GENTLEMAN IN A BLACK ROBE WHO TALKS IN CAPITALS, DON'T YOU THINK?







K

Keith from over on t'Isle of Man, like many of us has a familiar problem – he's addicted to bikes. His main passion is for classic Triumphs, although he also owns an early Honda twin and a modern Kawasaki Z, both of which can only be described as 'immaculate'. His heart belongs

to the output of Meriden, though, and so, when he was offered a Triumph project in the pub one night after consuming a quantity of the complex carbohydrates in liquid more commonly known as beer, a deal was done. It was a '63 Tiger 100 motor in a modified '58 5TA frame and, having not yet seen it, his intention was to build it into a classic trials bike and sell on the bits he didn't need to fund it but, the moment he laid eyes on it, that plan went out the window.

The bike, as bought, was an abandoned bobber project that was languishing in a conservatory with flat tyres. It had some very nice bits (an already painted T140 tank and 'guards for a start), but it also had a wiring loom that ran through the frame but wasn't connected to anything at either end (and the lower half disappeared into a plastic box, and all the wires were sprayed black, which didn't help with tracing what was supposed to do what). This, and a number of other things he felt weren't right, left him really but one option – start again from scratch.

First job was to strip the motor to see why it wasn't working, and he soon found it was in perfect condition, with all the rotating parts well within tolerances – the fault turned out to be that the timing was 180 degrees out. He swiftly retimed correctly, and that was that cured – rare when that happens, isn't it?

That done, it was on to the next part of the project. The seat you see was on the bike already, although mounted at an angle a Norwegian ski-jumping ramp designer'd've been proud of – he made a new mounting plate for it to seat the springs at a better angle. That was that dealt with. Next came the wiring; again it was started from scratch, and he broke out his trusty tape measure to work out the size of box required to house a battery

and gubbins on the inside, and the things that needed to be air-cooled on the outside, and then a local company, Macro Metals in Ballasalla, turned the tape measure findings into the item you see below the oil tank.

Speaking of oil, as many of you'll know, classic Triumphs have oil breather pipes that, usually, exit on to the ground below the bike (it's not only vertically-split crankcases that're responsible for oily Tarmac below a Triumph), but Keith, having such a background in racing where they don't like the idea of oil potentially making its way on to the rear wheel at speed, sourced a neat little catch-tank, originally designed for competition cars, and piped that into the loop to make sure none of the slippery stuff ever reaches the road surface anywhere near his back 'oop... well, as little of it as is possible with a sixty-two-year-old Triumph engine anyway.

Next up, a speedo. Now, he really wanted a white-faced dial to fit with the general vibe of the bike and, after quite a bit of searching, found a Royal Enfield one that was not only perfectly right, but also had the correct ratio for the front wheel. He's making this sound easy, isn't he? He handmade a new mount for it from aluminium, but this still left him needing a surround for it. As luck would have it, he was having a new boiler fitted at the time, and the gas fitter'd just removed a piece of aluminium pipe from the old boiler that was the perfect size for one – et voila, a day-and-a-half's swaging, beating, and polishing produced the perfect speedo ensemble.

Moving on, the Vincent-style rear light's of a type that makes quite a regular appearance in these pages, but he felt he could improve it – the wiring connections're held in by exposed screws, you see, that don't look the best from a rear elevation, so yet another quick womble in the dark recesses of his workshop turned up a rubber grommet of BMC origin that, when bonded to another from a car suspension strut, made the perfect, far neater, backing for the light.

As you may've got the impression, the majority of the bike is as it was when he got it, albeit stripped, checked, and put back together properly, and he's been really lucky to've got away with just fettling bits and pieces to get them as they should've been in the first place. Take the paint for example – it was already done when he got it, and is good so he's left it alone other than to add the Triumph logos. He doesn't know who painted it, or perhaps hydro-dipped it as it has that complexity of pattern that suggests it's been 'dipped' rather than hand-painted, but it's beautiful either way.

Once the bike was reassembled, it was found it ran out of steam at the top end so, as Keith knew the timing was spot-on, this meant something was up with the carb, and it was soon found to have the wrong jets in – with new ones fitted, the bike now runs in a manner befitting a machine of such beauty and poise.

Anyway, he has his eye on the next project so he needs to move the Triumph on to make room for it, so if you'd like to give it a home ring or text him on 07624 417039 or email k-spencer@manx.net, and be prepared to argue around the £5,620 mark.

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WORLD OF HILLY

SPEC:

1963 Triumph Tiger 100 (T100SS) 500cc engine (rejetted carb, K&N air-filter, Boyer electronic ignition, one-off wrapped exhausts), 1958 Triumph Speed Twin 5TA frame (modified), stock Triumph footrests/hangers/controls, 21-inch front wheel, unknown Kawasaki front brake/forks/yokes, aftermarket 'bars, Royal Enfield speedo, aftermarket front mudguard (modified), Triumph T140 Bonneville petrol tank, aftermarket quilted-top sprung seat, aftermarket rear mudguard (modified), one-off struts, aftermarket octagonal oil tank, one-off battery/electrics box, one-off side-mount 'plate, unknown chainguard, 16-inch wheel, Triumph hub/brake, one-off torque arm, one-off loom, mini Bates headlight, aftermarket tail-light, aftermarket horn

FINISH:

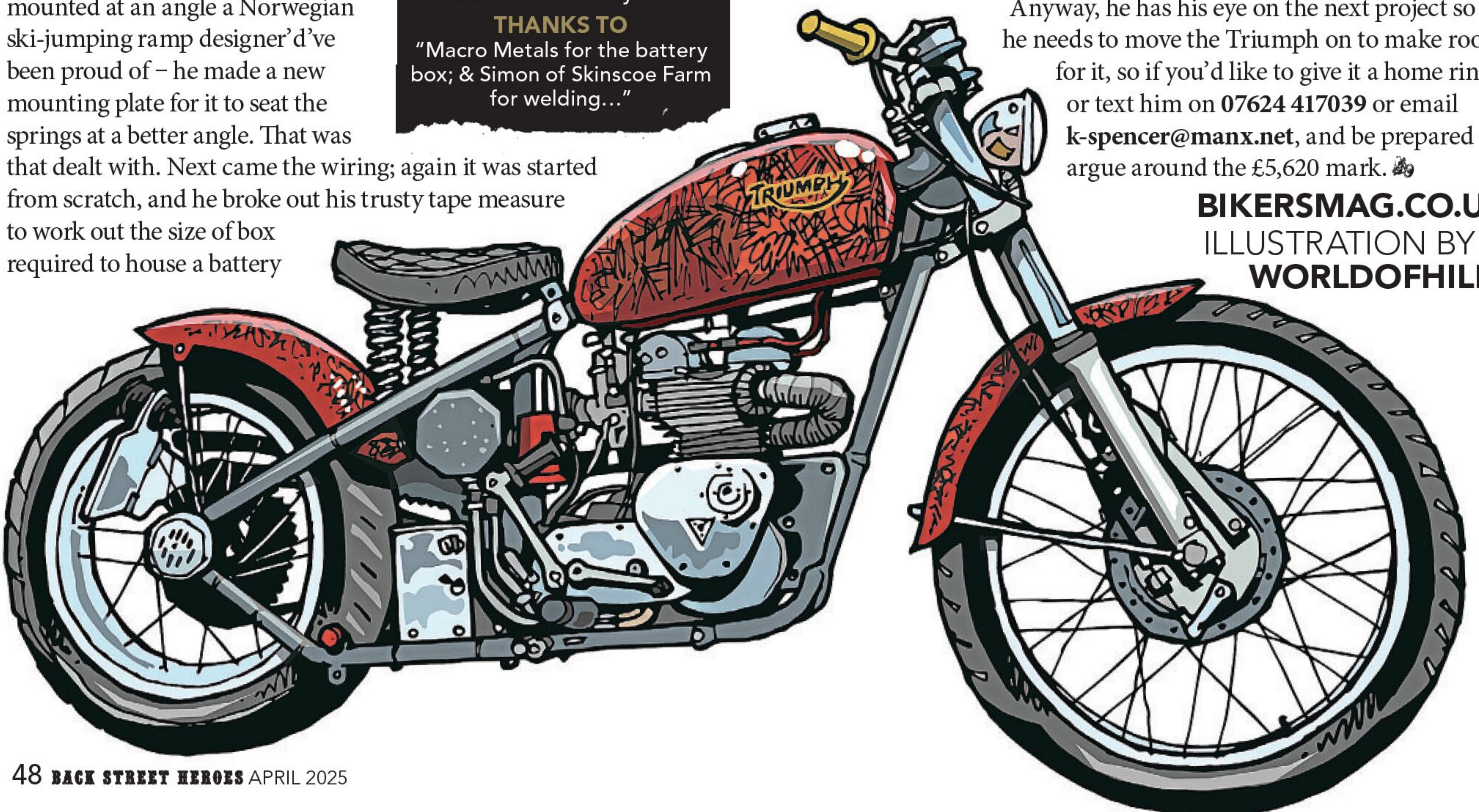
Red/black ice-crystal effect paint/dipping (?) by previous owner, grey sparkle powder-coat by previous owner, polishing by owner

ENGINEERING

Bike finished & clock mounting/surround/rear brake pedal mount/mudguard struts/seat mounts by owner

THANKS TO

"Macro Metals for the battery box; & Simon of Skinscoe Farm for welding..."



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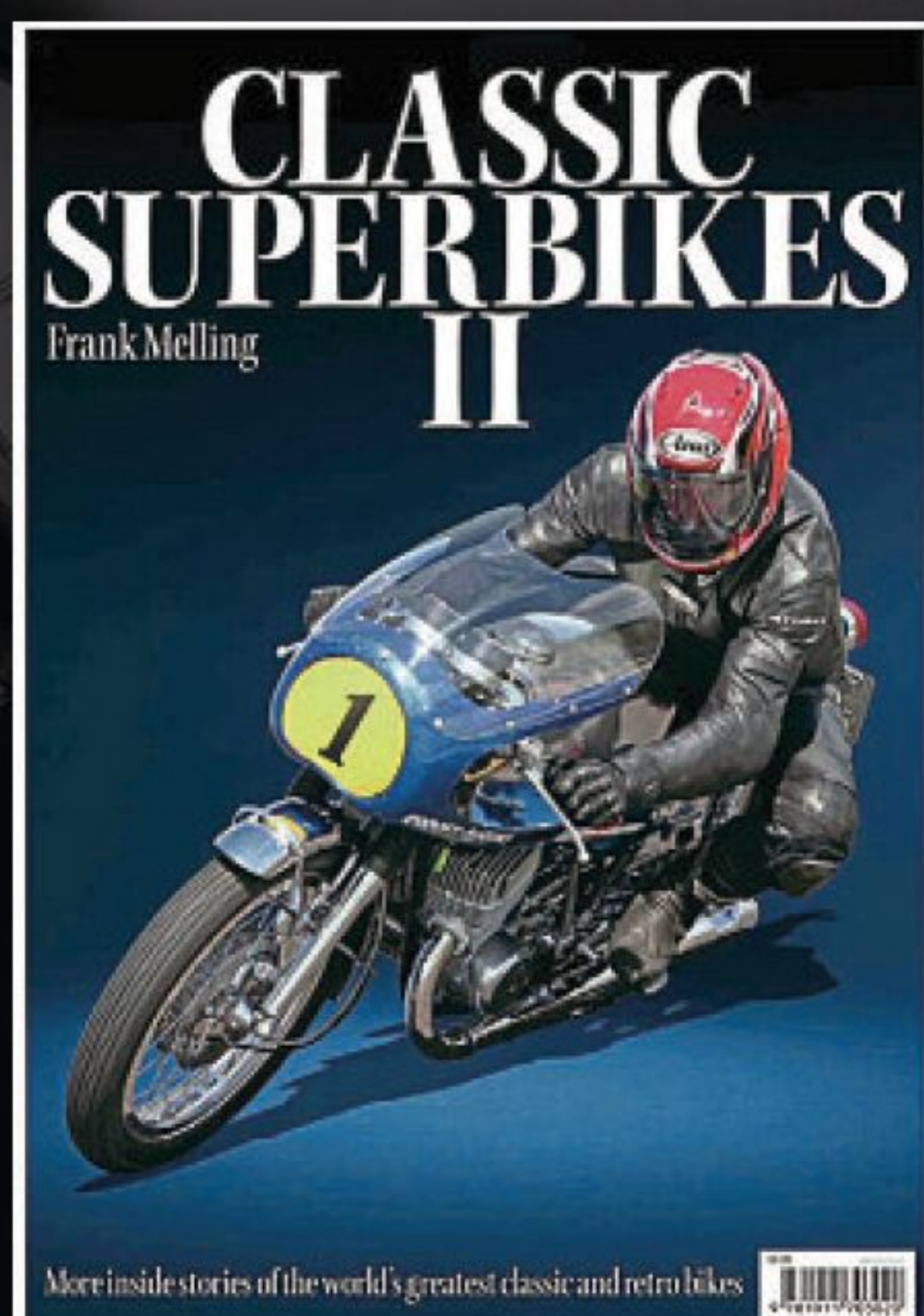
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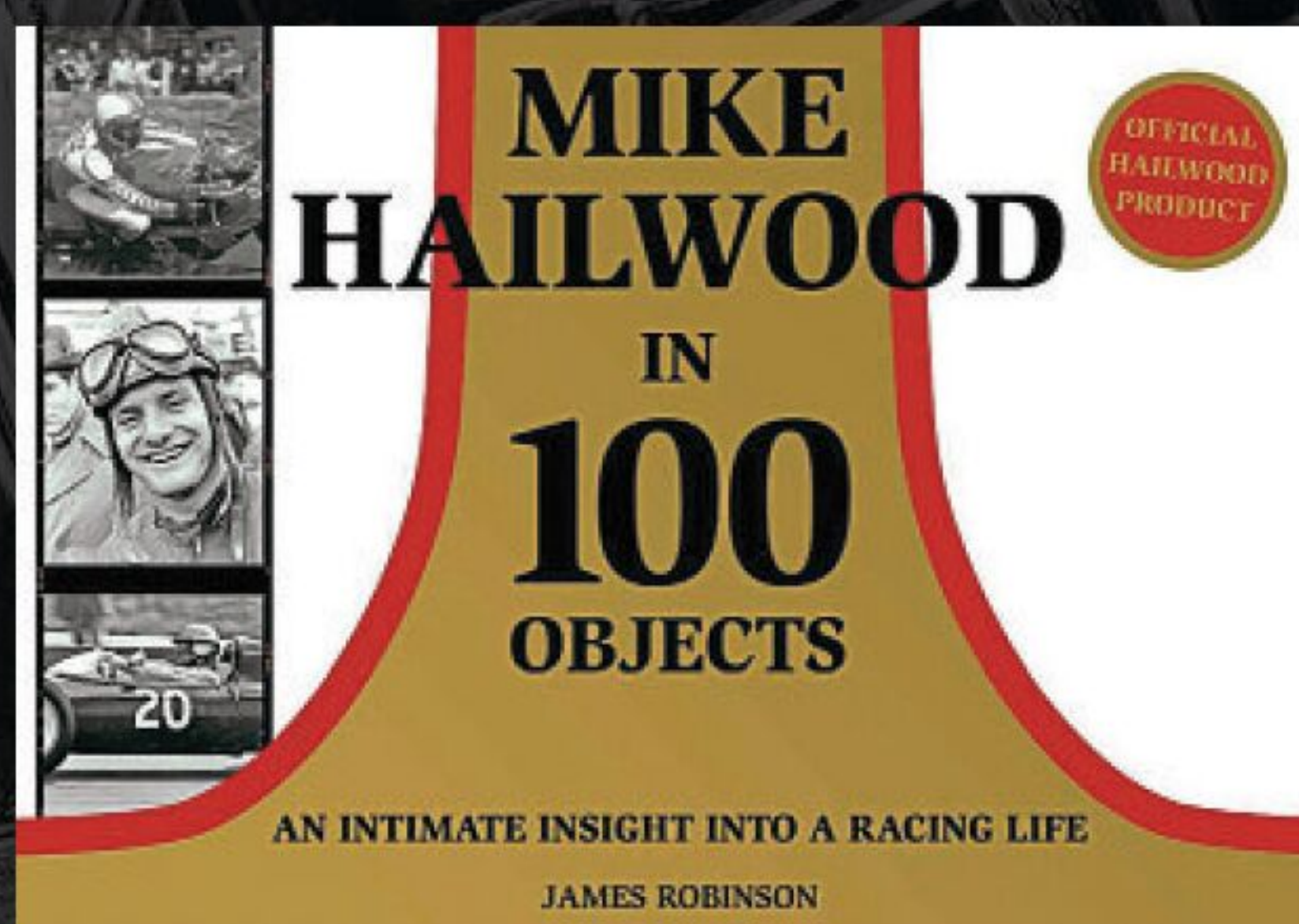
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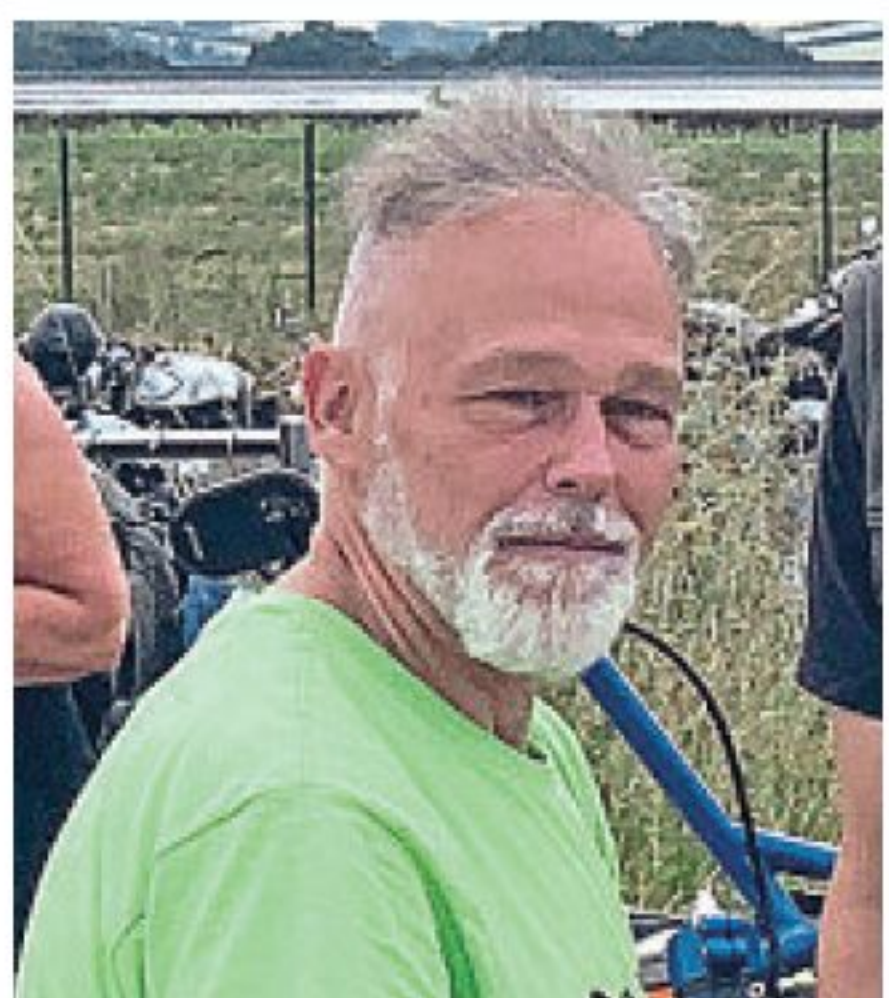
BACK STREET HEROES



PIC BY **DEL HICKEY**

CHOPS & BOBBERS, TRIKES & BIKES – JOIN THE BSH COMMUNITY TODAY

BACK STREET HEROES



Eee, hasn't the world changed, eh? When I first started drinking (semi) legally, a beer (Younger's Tartan bitter if you remember it) cost 79p in the local biker pub, and *BSH* was, I think, 95p. These days both a beer (well, round my way anyway) and a *BSH* cost a fiver each, but what would you say if we could do you a special deal, and do you a *BSH* at just £4.08 instead of £5.40? That's a saving of (works out on fingers) 24% – nothing to be sniffed at!

NIK SAMSON,
EDITOR



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LORD DRAKE KUSTOMS

LORD DRAKE KUSTOMS IS THE NAME OF A SPANISH CUSTOM HOUSE RUN BY FRANCISCO ALÍ MANEN WHICH, BECAUSE OF THE DRACONIAN SPANISH ANTI-MODIFICATION LAWS, CAN REALLY ONLY DO COSMETIC MODIFICATIONS, BUT THEY DON'T LET THAT STOP THEM...



K1 RACER



K1

Racer is the name of their BMW K100 café racer that they've fitted a radial USD front end (forks and brakes), later wheels, and an updated remote-reservoir rear shock to update the old (1980s) running gear, and then an Aprilia tail-piece with a one-off brown seat, a V-Rod headlight, aftermarket rad' cowls, their own high-level exhaust with suitably stumpy can, motogadget speedo unit, clip-on 'bars, LED indicators, Biltwell grips (got to have Biltwell grips on a café racer these days, it's the law), and Continental tyres. The paint is a grey/silver mix, with red, white and black stripes to emphasise its sportiness, and all the work was done in-house at Lord Drake Kustoms in Malaga.



T

he Iron 1925 is a 2018 Sportster Iron 883, inspired by the classic H-D models of 1925, and combines vintage style with modern performance. Fran Manen himself says: “Our mission is to turn ordinary motorcycles into true works of art on two wheels, and the Iron 1925 is an example of that. It’s been meticulously customised, reconfiguring the riding position, but maintaining the balance between comfort and classic style. Then came the wheel replacement, with new units equipped with spokes and vintage-style tyres, the black rims adding another timeless detail to the motorcycle’s overall aesthetic.

The design of this retro-vintage custom bike includes details that evoke the aesthetics of the 1920s, such as the classic tone paint scheme, in olive green with black and red pinstriping reminiscent of early 20th Century Harleys, not to mention the classic logo in red, airbrushed in true retro style, on the custom-type gas tank. Other notable details include the minimal rear end, the handcrafted leather seat paying homage to the historic 1925 models, the front mudguard, the side-mount ‘plate, the vintage motogadget speedometer, the wrapped stumpy ‘pipes, the low ‘bars, and the front mudguard-mounted number-plate.

Commissioned for a client in Portugal, every detail’s been carefully planned and executed to ensure it’s not only visually stunning, but also functional and comfortable for daily use.”

IRON 1925



LIBERATOR 2.0



L

iberator 2.0 could be the custom bike that Captain America'd ride in one of the Marvel films.

Based around a Softail Fat Boy Twin Cam, it's inspired by the original WLA 45s of the Second

World War, especially the one the superhero rides in 'Captain America: The First Avenger'. It has a brutal rear end with 240 wheel and custom rims, Legend air-suspension, a Supertrapp Paul Yaffe X exhaust system that's reminiscent of the barrels of a machine-gun, apehanger 'bars, oversize twin tanks with a leather divider that matches the seat and the grips, a custom headlight surround, and a small front mudguard, a Dakota digital speedo unit, and motogadget indicators. It's painted in an elegant Porsche metallic oak green, and has, on either side of the tank, stars that represent the one on Captain America's shield.





ROTHMANS

R

othmans is an RH1250 Sportster S dedicated by Francisco Ali Manen of Lord Drake Kustoms to one of his idols – automotive legend Ayrton Senna, on the 30th anniversary of his death.

Coming from a customer in a town near Lisbon in Portugal, it arrived completely stock and original, and the first idea was to modify the rear, specifically the number-plate holder to give it a more modern, café racer look. They also added a neat little headlight screen, minimalist LED indicators, an LED headlight, and a Dr. Jekyll &

Mr. Hyde 2-into-1 exhaust system which, in addition to looking and sounding good, has a beautiful carbon fibre collector protector to give a Formula 1 touch. Additionally, the speedo's been relocated to the front of the bars instead of in its original location, and the rear light's been modified, while the seat's been upholstered with a red double thread in a diamond pattern.

The most significant change, though, is the paint job, inspired by the colours of the Rothmans-sponsored Williams FW16 F1 car driven by Ayrton Senna. Prepped and done in-house, it's the bike's crowning glory.



69 - SIXTY NINE



D

ue to its name, 69 – Sixty Nine, and the posture it represents, this, Fran Manen says, is the most sexually transformed motorcycle Lord Drake Kustoms's created.

Based around a 1200 Sportster, it has a radical stance that encourages you to twist the throttle, and's called '69' because "sometimes it relaxes you, other times it takes you to the height of maximum excitement!" he says.

It's a simple, yet striking bike – new thick-spoke wheels in

black, a new headlight, low 'bars, a bug-eye air-cleaner, ground-poundersque 'pipes, a minimal back end, and a neat little brown leather sprung seat, and, of course, a side-mount. What makes it stand out is the striking white and elegant black paint, with aged gold pinstriping to stop the contrast between the two colours looking too vulgar.

This bike's the first in a series of similar, but obviously not identical, builds and orders've already come in from all over the world – not bad for a small workshop in Malaga (although Fran now has a workshop in Miami, too).

NEORACER



N

eoracer is a V-Max the owner of which wanted to have a new lease of life – made more modern, with a café racer/street-racer look.

The first thing done was the installation of a much more modern radial-brake USD front end, and a set of Ohlins rear shocks to replace the soggy, thirty-plus year-old stock items, and now the bike's taut and tight-handling. Next, tracker-type handlebars, and an aftermarket LED headlight held in race-style metal plate, were added, as well as a minimalist front 'guard, both handmade by LDK, and a motogadget speedo unit. The entire rear subframe's been cut, and a new tail unit with integrated seat's been handcrafted which, using the original opening system, opens to gain access to the underseat gas tank, and there's a handmade floating reg' plate holder. The exhaust's been remade in a new slimmed-down style, and the paint's subtle, not flashy, and highlights the muscles and lines of the Neoracer – matt graphite grey and black, with an imitation Alcantara seat.

The result is a bike that's gone from having an old, and perhaps somewhat outdated, look to being a new, modern Neoracer with the feel of a naked café racer with, above all, a beastly feel. 🏍️

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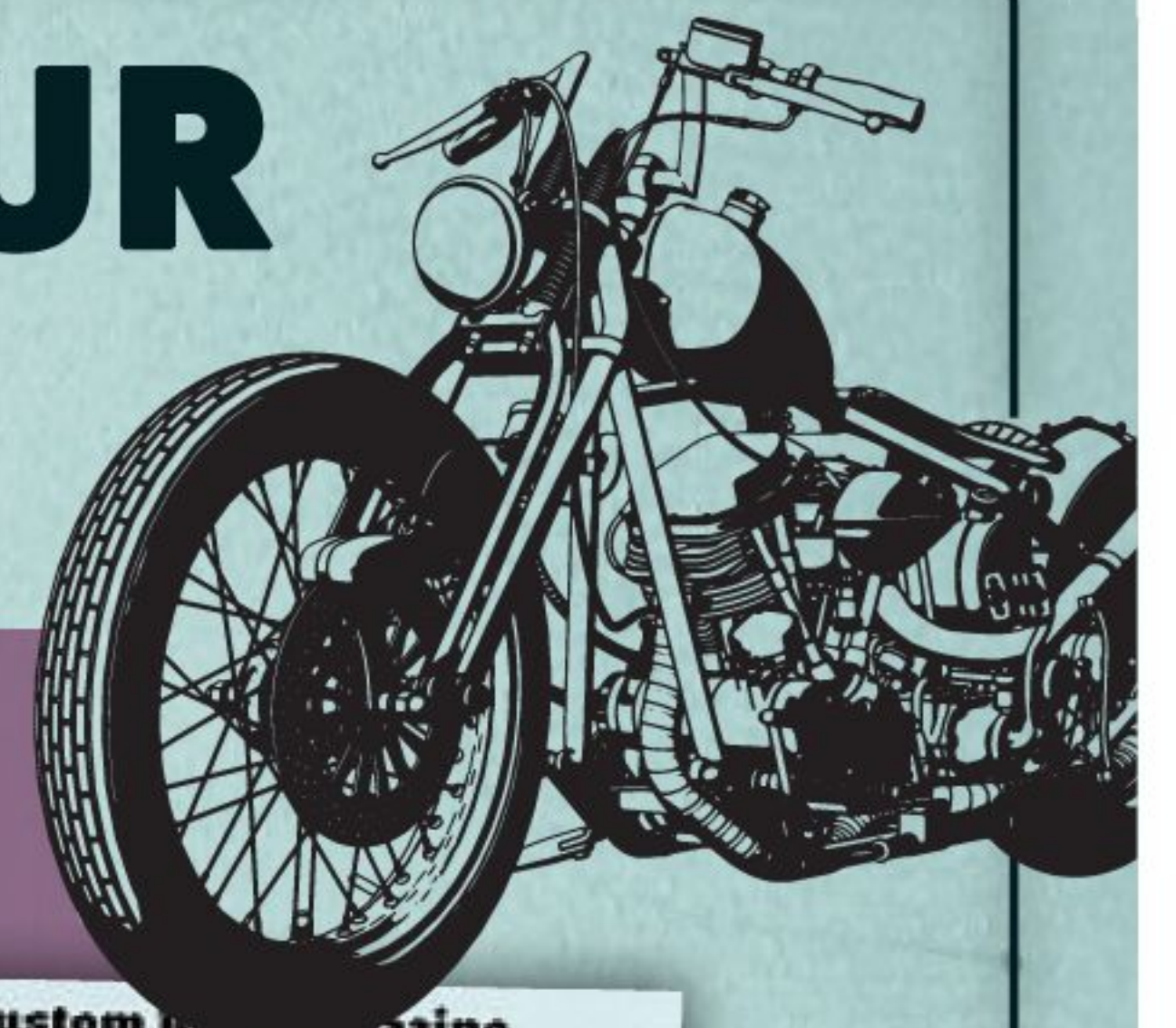
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**REAL WORLD
ROADTEST**

ROYAL ENFIELD GUERRILLA

ONE OF THE PROBLEMS WITH HAVING ONE'S GOOD LADY ON THE COMPANY INSURANCE SO THAT SHE CAN RIDE TEST BIKES WHILE I PHOTOGRAPH THEM IS GETTING HER TO GET OFF THEM SO THAT I CAN RIDE THEM TO DO THE ARTICLE WORDS – THE NEW ROYAL ENFIELD GUERRILLA 450 WAS, DEFINITELY, AN EXAMPLE OF THIS.





Y

ou see, being a mere slip of a thing, she finds the 650 twins a little too heavy for her, and the Himalayans a little too tall, but the Guerrilla, with its 30-inch seat height (the Himalayan is 32.5), fits her just perfectly because, while 30 inches may sound tall, the seat's narrow – it seems to be a thing manufacturers haven't yet got their

heads around; not everyone who rides, or wants to ride, bikes is a lanky bloke, and being able to get at least one foot, preferably both feet, down comfortably makes a rider, especially a new rider, feel that much more confident, doesn't it? I'm sorry, I know I bang on about this a lot, but that's cos it's important.

Anyway, the Guerrilla is a real step into the modern era for Royal Enfield – you could say, possibly slightly unkindly, that they used to be a manufacturer of 1950s-era throwbacks, but now they're a global success story. In 2010 the company shipped around 50,000 bikes in total – now it sells, apparently, more than 70,000 PER MONTH in India alone, with annual global sales rapidly heading towards the million-bike mark. Yes, they do still sell a lot of motorcycles suited to a cloth cap and gaiters (both on the bike and on the rider) and a whippet on the pillion seat, but their new Himalayan

off-roaders and the current range of 650cc parallel twins have catapulted them into the mainstream.

As I said last issue, the new-generation Himalayan 450's a giant step forward with its modern, liquid-cooled, engine, and they've gone that little bit further with this bike – the Guerrilla. It's a 'normal' motorcycle in the sense that it hasn't got fairings of any kind, nor any form of retro or custom styling – it's a normal motorcycle like many, many folk out there ride day in, day out, and do you know what? It's a good 'un, too.

Using the same 'Sherpa' engine (clever naming, eh, for an engine designed for a bike called a 'Himalayan') as the Himi, and the same high-spec TFT speedo/info unit ('clocks' to you and me) and switchgear, the steel tube frame design is similar to the off-roaders' but with a different subframe to take the one-piece seat, reposition the pillion footrests, and change the riding position from bolt-upright to leaning slightly forward as is usual on a 'normal' bike. The forks are 43mm RWUies, the wheels're alloy 17-inchers (120 front/160 rear), the brakes're a single 310mm front disc and two-piston caliper, and a single-pot caliper/270mm disc rear, with ABS, of course, the tank holds 11 litres of fuel tank, and the whole bike weighs just 184kg.

So, riding it then... well, once I'd prised it away from Pam. The bike feels small, but not stupidly so, and if you're a normal height (i.e. not String from Raw Steel Choppers) you won't look like a monkey on a mangle. It's comfortable, too, and the big clock's easy to see both around town and at speed. Yes, it does so speed – it'll cruise at 80, and tops out at just over the ton (I read somewhere, officer), but it does get a little vibey over 80 cos, well, it's only a 450 single, isn't it? There isn't a huge amount of torque at just 29.5lb-ft, but don't let the numbers fool you – it's good fun along B-roads and smaller As,



and'll overtake happily as long as you're aware it's a 450 single. Pam kept up with the 600cc silly-sider on most of the roads we rode, even ones I knew and she didn't, and never failed to get off with a smile on her face or the words: "I really like this!" She normally rides a Hornet 600 and a 750 Slabbie 'fighter, and her chop, of course, but felt completely at home on the smaller-engined Guerrilla. The suspension is, as has been previously mentioned on other Enfields, amazing, even on our feckin' awful roads, the lights're LEDs, there's almost a snarl from the air-box when you whang the throttle open, and Royal Enfield quote fuel consumption as 83.3mpg (I'm guessing that's a test-track, constant throttle figure, not a real world with traffic figure) which

means the 11-litre (2.4-gallon) tank'll give you 199 miles per tank... yeah, and politicians have our best interests at heart. Realistically? About 140 to a tank's about what we got, maybe a little more.

Anyway, the Guerrilla 450's expected in dealers in a month or so, and a range of colours're being offered (silver, black, blue/white, the two-tone gold/red pictured, and yellow/black), and prices'll start at £4,850 – an absolute steal for what you get for your money. Get more info' or a roadtest from your local Royal Enfield dealer or www.royalenfield.com 

NIK



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Local coffee stop, number 1 – Krazy Horse in Bury St Edmunds



A YEAR OF CUSTOM BIKING...

PART THREE

SO, WHERE DID WE LEAVE OFF LAST ISSUE? THE FUTURE BIKE WAS POORLY, THE BANDIT CHOP WAS IN FOR A SERVICE/CARB ATTENTION, THE SILLY-SIDER'S STILL ASLEEP UNDER ITS BLANKIES, AND THE HORNET'S... WELL, JUST THE HORNET REALLY.

F

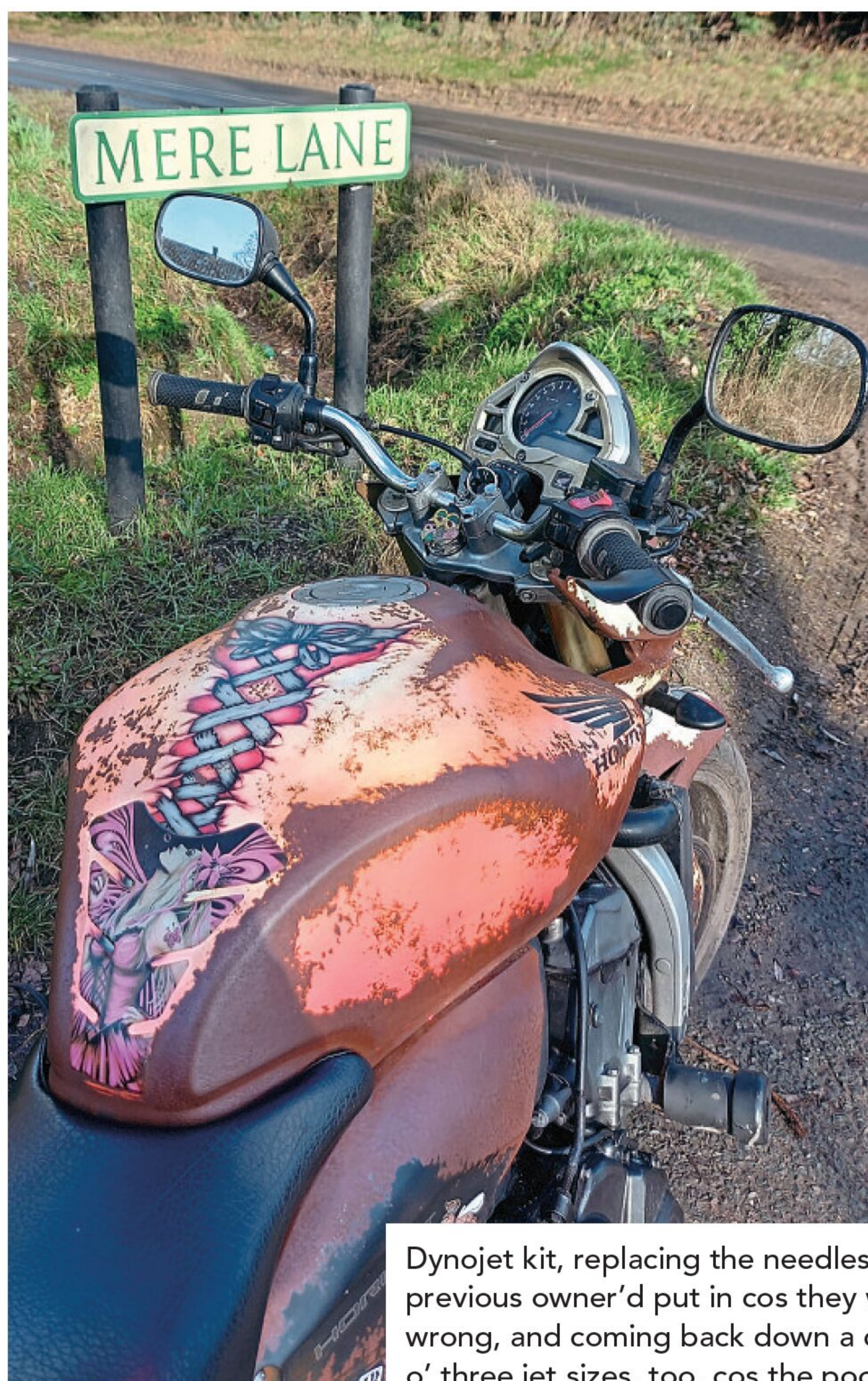
irst things first, TFB (The Future Bike): the plan, because of the damage and wear to the bores of the GSX-R 1100

motor it's had for the past few years, was to transplant in a spare Bandit 12 motor I had but, it turns out, that wasn't in great shape either. I did also

have the old motor from Pam's 750 which, we were under the impression, needed new gaskets an' stuff, but that turned out to be a bit FUBAR, too. The joys of f**king about with twenty-plus-year-old engines, eh?

It was decided, then, that the way forward was to rebuild the 1100, and Shaun set to with that, only to find that the barrels were already





LEFT: You are now leaving Silent Hill...

ABOVE: Yes, we know it is, but there's no point hurting its feelings by being rude, is there?

BELOW LEFT: Local coffee stop, number 2 – Walkers Snacks near Mildenhall



The start of something – new (well, secondhand) tank for the silly-sider

2mm oversize and couldn't be rebored further. He was slightly stuck at this point cos finding decent barrels for a thirty-odd-year-old engine, from a bike that's traditionally thrashed everywhere by everyone, isn't the easiest thing in the world. However, shortly after, a friend of his, who's a bit of a Suzuki guru, came in and told him that the oversize 1100 bores could be reworked to take a set of Bandit 1200 pistons, which he happened to have back at his place. Phew. The bores'd need sending off to someone who'd do what was needed, so they've gone, and Shaun now has to rebuild the (very) leaky head with new (valve stem) seals and guides. That means that, hopefully, I should get the poor ol' beastie back some time towards the end of this month, assuming it all goes to plan anyway.

Moving on, Pam's Bandit Six chop: Nigel at Moto Tweaks in Chelmsford pulled the carbs off, and fitted a

Dynojet kit, replacing the needles the previous owner'd put in cos they were wrong, and coming back down a couple o' three jet sizes, too, cos the poor thing was way over-rich. He also fitted a pair of new tyres cos the ones on it, although they had plenty of tread, were 12 and 10 years old respectively and'd started to crack quite badly and, as well as that, he freed off the stuck rear brake, too. Then, those bits done, it went on to the dyno and that revealed that the exhaust REALLY needed some work. There's no link-pipe section, y'see – the exhaust can's just welded to the back of the down-pipe collector, and so the poor thing can't breathe properly. He had a quick look at it, but doesn't have the facilities there to make a new centre section so, after asking Pam what she wanted to do, he set the motor up as best he could, and she'll use it as is for the summer, and get a friend of ours, who I'll come to in a moment, to have a look at redoing the exhaust next winter. At the time of writing, she's not yet ridden the Six since it came back from Chelmsford, but Nigel says it should be fine to pootle around on for the summer – yes, it has a flat-spot around 5k rpm, but as long as you accelerate steadily, rather than just gas it, it'll pull through it okay. She's hoping to give it a run this coming weekend (about three weeks in the past in your time), so we'll see if it

is, or whether it'll need to go to Gary a little sooner than she'd hoped.

Gary? Yes, Gary, Gary Sanders, of the Vampire CBR1000 chop, the stunning XV750 trikey-sidecar thing, the ZZR1100 quad, and a host of other very cool bikes, kit-cars, and hot rods. He's an obscenely talented fabricator who's retired now and only does jobs that interest him to keep his hand in, around playing with the two lightning-fast tektro hot rods he's built, and smoking about on the (now turbo) Vampire and the hardtail/hardhead Moto Guzzi chop you might've seen on our stand at Stafford last year. He lives in the next village to Pam, and's been doing smaller jobs for custom folk for years, and is a quiet, amiable guy who can turn his hand to almost anything, so is the ideal person to sort her exhaust. He's also the ideal person to extend the spare B6 tank I had knocking about so that I can take the Lobo paint one off the silly-sider before I scratch the hell out of it. It's a job I've been trying to find someone to do for a while now without success, and he did within a week. It's only extended externally, to fit with the lower UXB subframe, and it's now up with my long-suffering mate Ian (Hyper Trikes) being painted gloss black at the same time as he repaints the Spondon? (as it's now called) black, too.

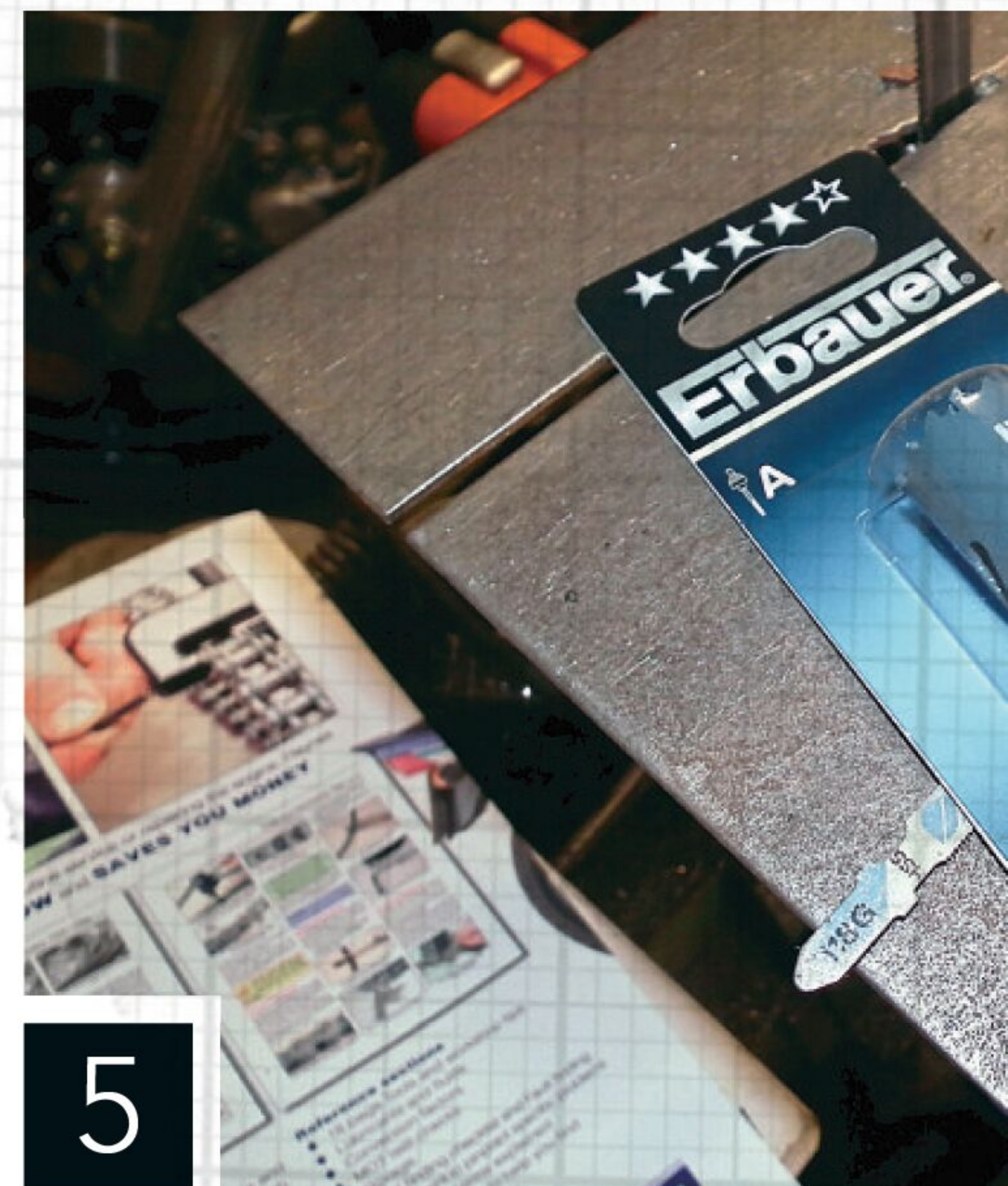
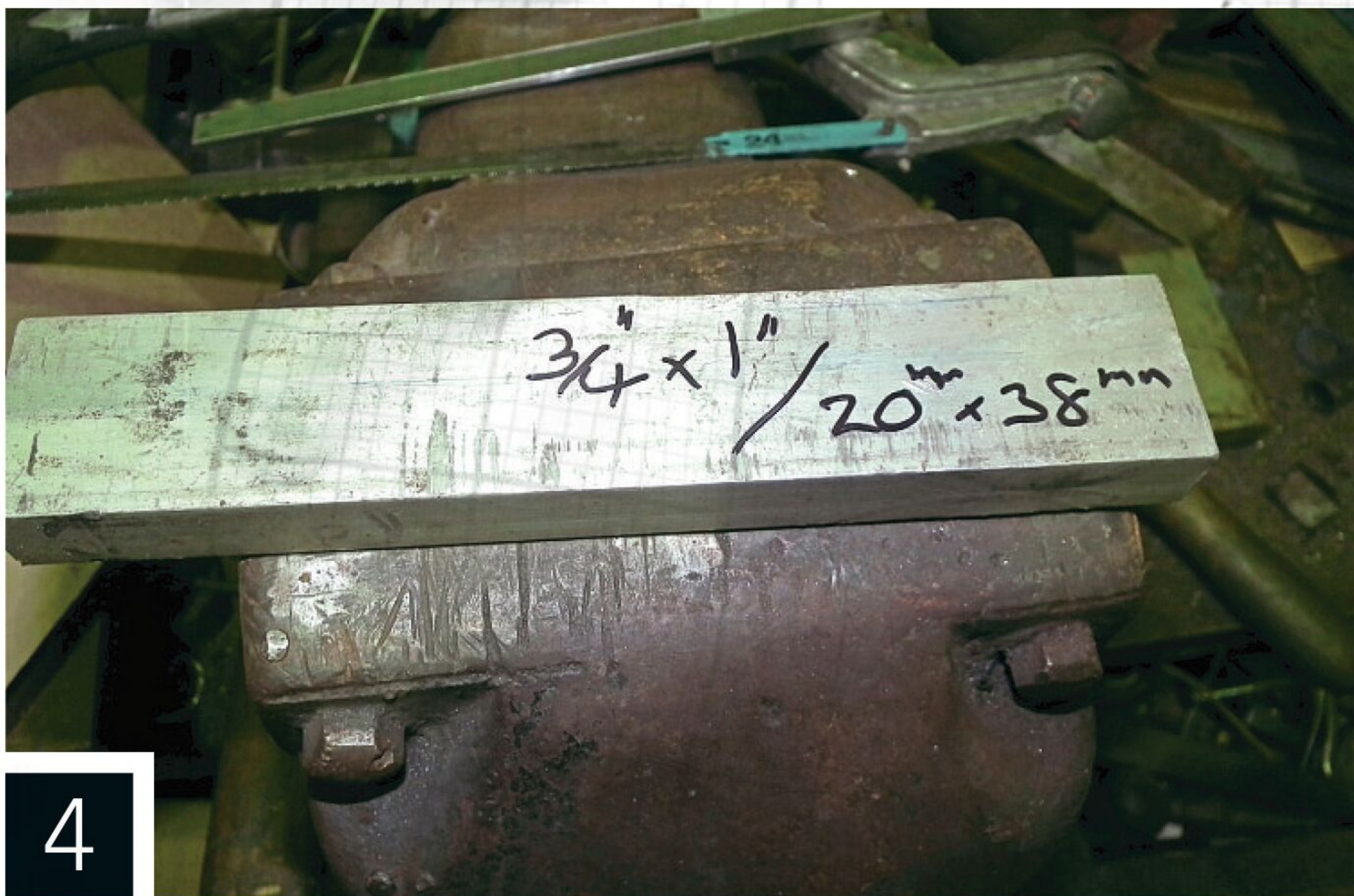
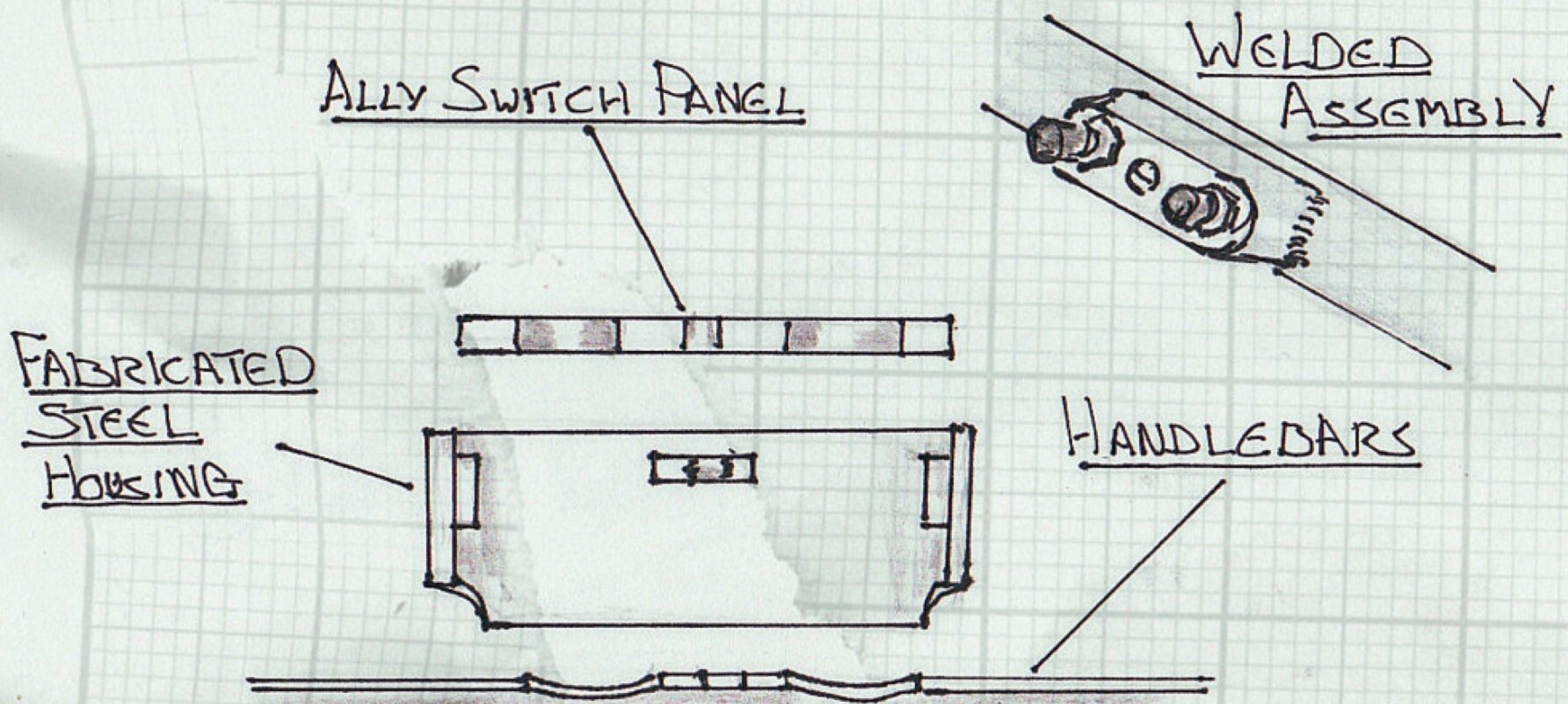
It's all go, isn't it? 🍌

NIK

Mr Bridges' VOL. VIII, EPISODE III Motorcycle Diaries

TECH

AFTER THE LAST FEW MONTHS OF PICKING ELECTRICS APART, I THOUGHT I'D CARRY THE THEME FORWARD AND, HAVING LOOKED AT USING MICRO-SWITCHES, PAY SOME ATTENTION TO HOW TO MOUNT THEM TO THE HANDLEBARS.



IF you have access to welding equipment, then fabricating a small steel or stainless steel 'box' to weld on to the handlebars, with a recessed cross-piece that's threaded for a screw to hold a mounting plate for the switches (Fig.1), is relatively straightforward, if a little fiddly (although if you're making mountings for micro-

switches it's all going to be a little fiddly by definition) – the problem is that micro-switches mount from the back of the panel. You can get switches that mount from the front of the panel by clipping into the hole (Fig.2), which avoids the need for a detachable panel to mount them, but they're generally a lot bulkier. They might work but, since they seem to need a mounting hole that's 20mm

in diameter, would need clearance for the retaining clip to spring out behind that, and because they have a 23mm bezel they're 'fatter' than a set of 7/8" handlebars at 22.25mm. They'd probably work with a one-inch set, although I haven't got any idea of the depth you'd need for the switch, and there don't seem to be momentary push versions – I did find OFF/ON, ON/ON and OFF/ON/

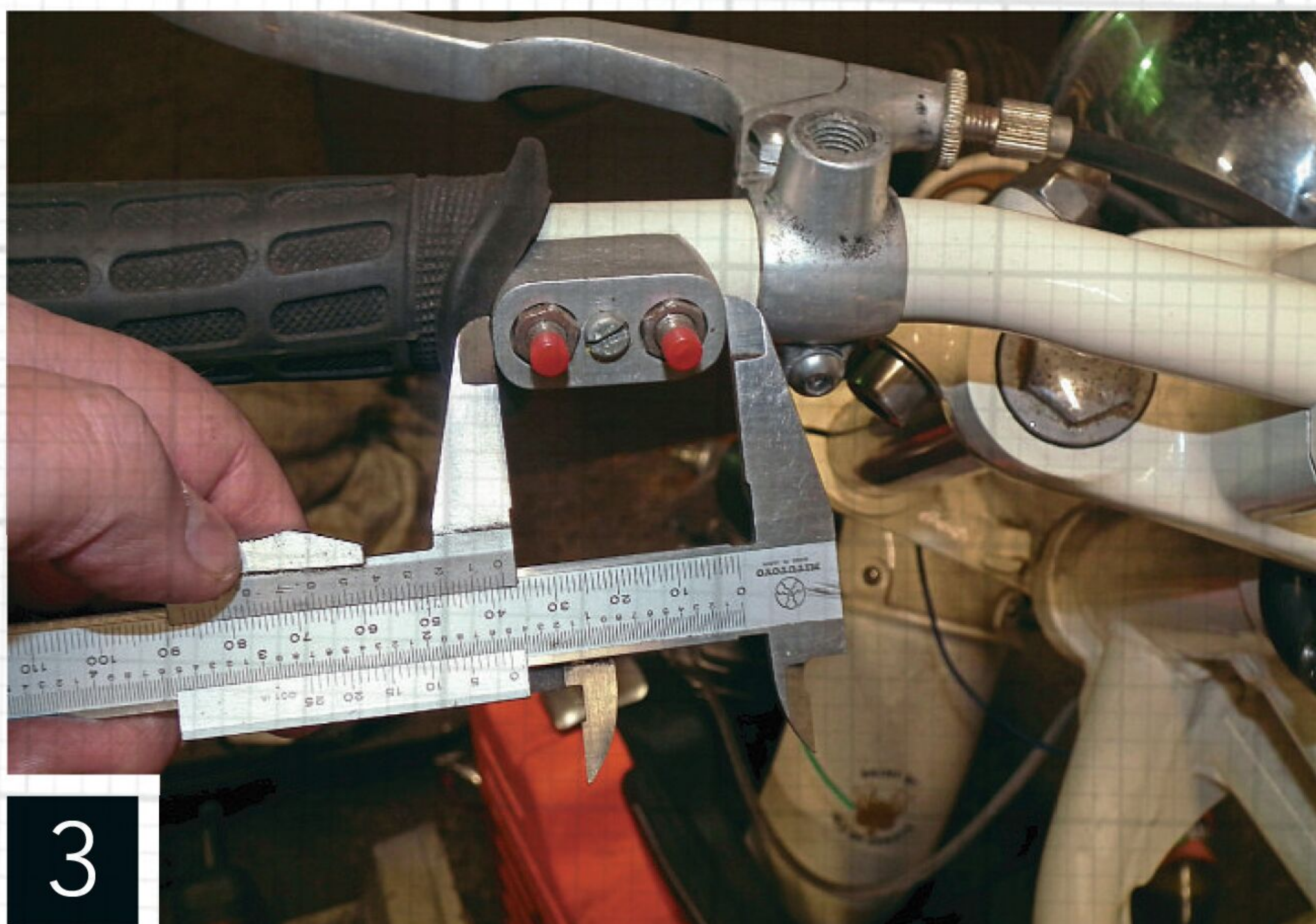
OFF versions on the Vehicle Wiring Products website which'd do lights and indicators, but don't offer any easy solutions for a horn or a starter button. Having said that, at around £3 a switch it wouldn't break the bank to buy one, and pull it apart to see if the internals could be modified to make it

to machine tools, and some free time, but didn't have access to large sums of money to buy aftermarket parts with. If you machine parts from aluminium, then you can polish them and you have shiny parts for your hot rod, or bike, without spending a lot of money. Ironically, if you remember

aluminium from a scrap bin at work, and you'd work with what you could get. These days, though, your best bet is either an on-line metal store, or that guy that used to salvage chunks of aluminium for his mates who's now selling them on eBay instead and, while this's dearer, it has the



2



3



6

a momentary-on switch, I suppose?

The obvious solution for the micro-switches is a billet housing (Fig.3), but not everyone has welding equipment, and even fewer people have access to a mill, so for a lot of us that's out of the question. Billet custom parts have a bit of an odd history. They started to appear on hot rods in the 1980s because the people that were building hot rods had access

back that far, the idea caught on, so the 'free time' aspect of it wasn't free anymore, and billet parts became synonymous with 'expensive'. If you're prepared to put in a little time with a hacksaw and a file, though, and do a little pre-planning, you can make your own convincing billet parts without using a mill. Once upon a time, most people had a mate who could salvage a chunk of

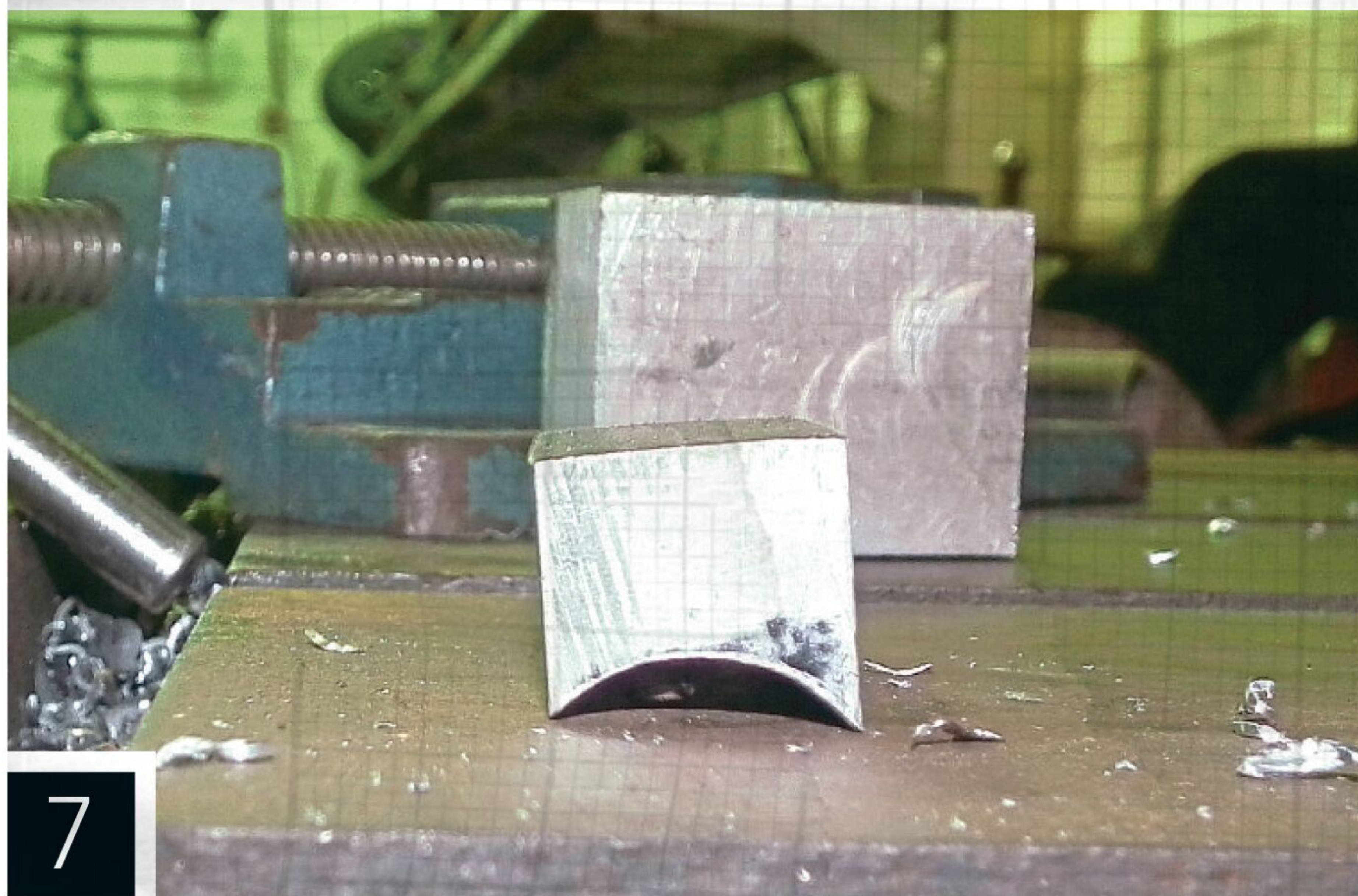
advantage of letting you order the size of material you want (Fig.4).

Machining's a matter of removing material until you're left with what you want (deductive manufacturing, as opposed to additive manufacturing, e.g. 3D printing), so starting with a piece of material of the right dimensions saves a lot of the work. In my case I went with a piece of 1.5-inch by three-quarter-inch aluminium

bar since what I wanted was a piece 1.5-inch wide by three-quarter-inch deep (38mm x 20mm more or less) with a hollow curve with a $\frac{7}{16}$ -inch radius to sit against the handlebars. You can do this on a pillar drill, but

groove in, because trying to drill a 22mm hole in 19mm material tends to go horribly wrong. There's a limit to how long a groove you can make like this because of the depth of the hole-saw, and it usually turns out

One of the hallmarks of billet parts was Allen bolts countersunk so they were flush with the body of the part, except that Allen bolts don't have tapers on the back of their heads, so it's not exactly a countersink –



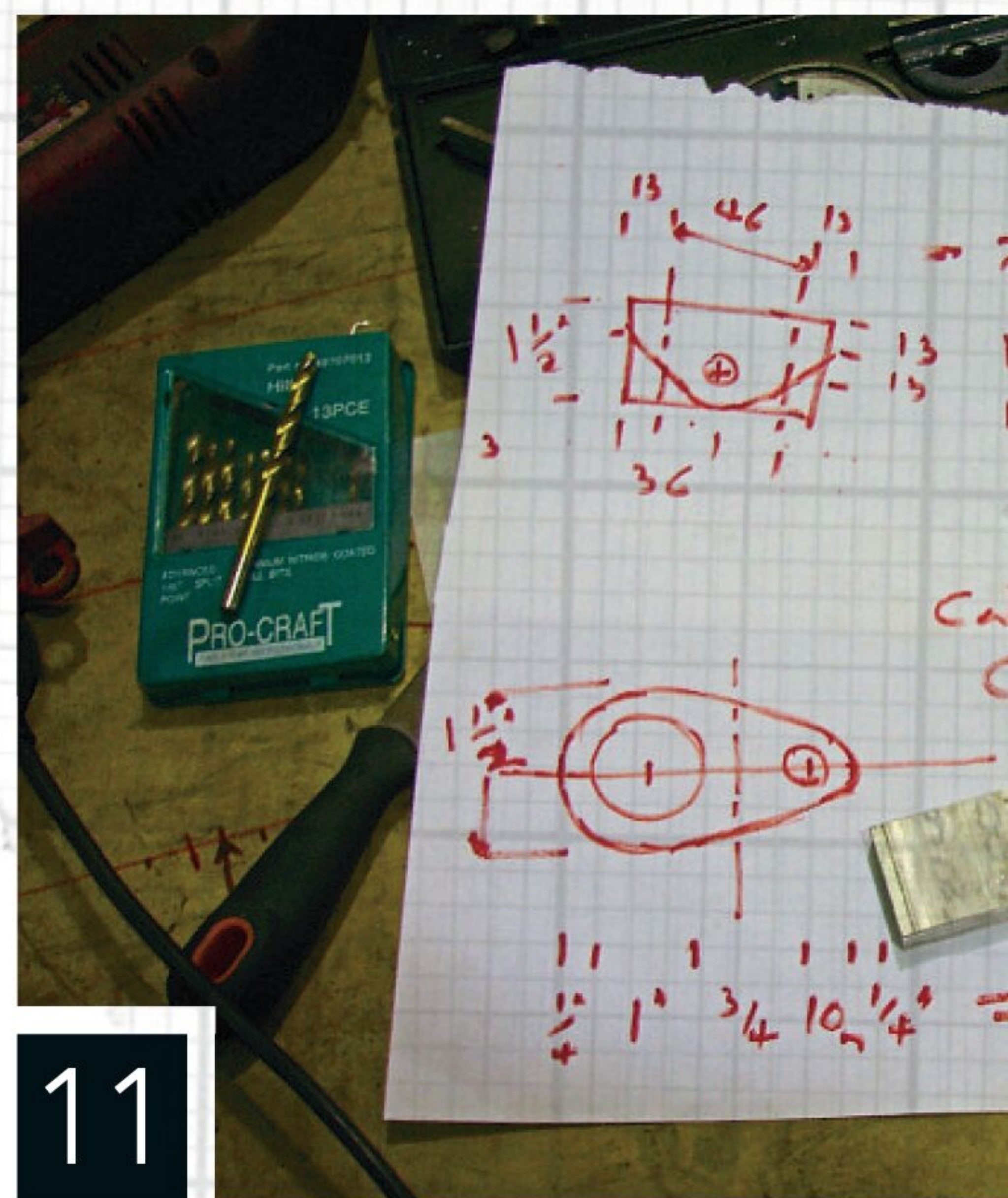
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10



11

the trouble with a pillar drill is that the chuck's held in by a Morse taper, and Morse tapers don't like side-loads, which is why the chuck falls out if you try and use them with something like a carbide cutter to shape material. However, they're fine in a straight line, so I made the curved back to the switch housing by standing the material on edge, and using a hole-saw (Fig.5) to put the

acceptably close, rather than spot on, but it gets the job done (Fig.6).

That left me with a rectangular piece of aluminium that was a decent fit on to a piece of $\frac{7}{8}$ -inch tube (Fig.7). The next problem was going to be mounting the switches. Marking and drilling the rectangular face was easy enough, but sitting the shoulder of the switch body against the curved back face of the housing wasn't.

more of a counter-bore. The tool for making counter-bores is called, unsurprisingly, a counter-bore (Fig.8). I bought a set of five from Amazon for about £12, but they only work with 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8mm Allen bolts (Fig.9). If you want to use M10 and M12, expect to pay around twice that. I've made oddball-sized ones by grinding a nose on a standard drill bit (upper one in Fig.8) with a reasonable degree of

success, although getting a clean shoulder by the nose is a problem unless you grind it for an undersize pilot hole, make the counter-bore, and then finish the pilot hole to size. Talking of pilot holes, the M6



button switches is 7mm, and the retaining nut's too large for the 10.4mm counter-bore of the M6 tool, so I ended up using the M8 tool to make the counter-bore making a recess for the nut on the front face, and another in

be rounded off, and the whole thing finished cosmetically before fitting it. Aside from making ridiculously fiddly mounts for micro-switches, with a selection of suitable hole-saws and counter-bores it's possible to



9



12

counter-bore, for instance, needs a 6.2mm pilot hole, and makes a 10.4mm recess for the head of a M6 Allen bolt so you may need some actual clearance drills, as opposed to the whole number ones you get in most drill bit sets, or you might get away with it, although it's useful to know that a quarter-inch drill bit is 6.35mm.

The threaded portion of the push-

the groove on the back of the switch mounting (which I would show you a photograph of, but the SD card it's on has had a sulk, but it looked a lot like the one in Fig.3).

The toggle switches (Fig.10) will sit in a 14mm hole, and the threaded portion'll fit through an M6 hole so, using the M6 counter-bore, opening the back out with a 14mm drill seemed to work. At this point the ends can

make things like cable retainers and headlamp mounts (Figs.11&12). In any machining job, order of operations is important so, for instance, if you want a counter-bored hole at an angle to a face, it's usually easier to drill the hole while the material's square, and cut the angle later. It also makes a change from working with steel and having grinder sparks going everywhere. 🐼

MR. BRIDGES



THE COUNCIL MAN COMETH

**"YOU LOOK NOTHING LIKE A COUNCIL
WORKER!" THE OLD WOMAN SHOUTED AT
ME THROUGH THE TINY OPEN WINDOW.**

She clearly meant this as an insult. She was stood on a chair behind her front window, shouting at me through the little window at the top. I could see her mouth through the opening, her nose hidden by the frame; her eyes, floating free on their own, stared at me through the glass.

This was an awkward situation. I was very much aware of how vulnerable some people are and feel in their own homes, but I'd done the Customer Care training and knew exactly how to resolve it. "I am from the bloody Council!" I bellowed back. "I've come all the way over here to help you complete the forms, here's my ID!" I slapped my ID against the window, right in front of her face.

She peered suspiciously at my ID. "That could be anyone!

Besides, that might be a false ID, one you made." She looked me up and down. "You don't look anything like a man from the Council! A nice man in a suit came last time." And that just goes to show how appearances can be deceptive – that 'nice man in a suit' had been sacked and was doing a three-month stretch in prison. To be fair to the old lady, I wasn't most people's idea of a man from the council – I was in a collar and tie, yes, but it just happened to be under an old, battered, black leather bike jacket that, with my shaved head, Doc' Marten boots, crash helmet, and loud and somewhat modified Kwak GPz750 parked at the kerb, meant I wasn't what most people expected. On the one hand I had to congratulate the old lady for being so careful, on the other hand, this was a bloody nuisance,

and one that I'd done my best to avoid.

"Mrs. S," I shouted through the window, "I wrote to you on official Council paper, AND I 'phoned you to tell you I would be on a motorbike."

"Well, I told my daughter, and she told me it was a hoax – Council men don't ride motorbikes."

This one bloody does, I thought. Curtains were twitching in the neighbour's windows. I needed to get this sorted before someone called the Police... again. "Mrs. S, 'phone the Council, get the main office number from the 'phone book, and ask to speak to Benefits – they'll confirm who I am."

"How do I know I won't be put through to you?"

Now, this made me blink. This all happened 30-odd years ago, before mobile phones were an

THE COUNCIL MAN COMETH

everyday object. “Mrs. S, I can’t answer the ’phone in the office if I’m stood here; outside your front door, can I?”

She considered my point, and then disappeared, I assumed ’phoning my office. I was wrong. A few minutes passed. I didn’t notice the police car quietly creeping down the street until it stopped right outside the house. I saw the two coppers eyeballing me.

“Oh, for f**k’s sake,” I sighed to myself. I watched them climb out of the car.

“Alright, chief,” the nearest one said, “what’s the story?”

I explained who I was and why I was there, showed them my ID, the file, and paperwork. More curtains twitched up and down the street. It turned out Mrs. S’d ’phoned her daughter, and the daughter’d ’phoned the Police. The two coppers thought I was genuine but, just to make sure, they radioed the station who, in turn, ’phoned my office. I could picture the office, the scenes of merriment taking place at my expense – this was going to cost me a round of doughnuts. They eventually convinced Mrs. S that I was a man from the Council. Stood in her doorway, she again looked me up and down. “I suppose you’d better come in,” she sniffed and, reluctantly, let me in.

The Police suggested that, as this was the second suspicious person report they’d had about me, to save us all time and trouble I supply the local nick with my details, description, and even a photo so I could have my own ‘not wanted’ poster.

I didn’t have to buy the office doughnuts this time. As I walked back into the office the manager ran up to me. “Drift, thank God you’re back! Just in time! Keep your bike jacket on and get down to Reception – you need to break up a fight!” Why did I need to break up a fight? That wasn’t in

my job description, and plenty of my colleagues were far bigger than me. I did, though, stomp into Reception, big boots, bike jacket, shaved head, to where two men were facing off, shouting at each other. I’d learnt shouting from the best; my Dad’d been a Staff Sergeant Physical Training Instructor – if he shouted at you, you knew you’d been shouted at. Shouting’s in my DNA.

“Stand still!” I shouted. “Stand very f**king still! You, over there, sit down and keep your mouth shut. You, over there, and keep your mouth shut! How old are you? You should be ashamed of yourselves! Keep quiet until your names’re called! Don’t f**king make me come down here again!” Sheepishly, the two men did as I told them, and I stomped out of reception. The manager called me to his office, I thought to thank me for breaking up the fight, but instead he told me off for swearing. I told him that next time HE could f**king go down and sort a fight out then, and I think he realised I was a bit upset and offered to buy me a coffee. I held out for a coffee and a doughnut.

Despite the trouble with Mrs. S, home visits were my favourite part of the job, especially visits to older people. I think they liked the bike, and the jacket, the boots, even the shaved head, as I wasn’t the bland-man-from-the-Council-in-a-suit. There’d always be tea and biscuits, sometimes on the best china, laid out on a tray, and I knew my visit, even just to complete benefit forms, was the highlight of the day, the week, or even longer, so why not spend an extra 10 or 15 minutes than was strictly necessary and have a chat? It was even better if we had a laugh together – I was doing a social service.

These visits were enjoyable, but some were particularly special because people’d tell me their

amazing stories. There was the old lady of 94. In her early 20s she’d trained as a nurse, not that long after the Great War, and she’d served as a nurse in London through the Blitz. She was fantastic! In answer to one of the questions she said: “Well, my long-term plan is...” – we looked at each other and burst out laughing. ‘You go girl,’ I thought, ‘you have a long-term plan at 94. Why not?’

There was a downside to these visits, though – I’d see people for two or three years, and then they fell off the end of the earth, like the man who’d worked with my dad before I was born; the small, frail lady who always had the best china out who, every year, told me the same story of how her sisters, strapping, healthy ‘gels’ who played tennis and golf, nicknamed her ‘Little Mouse’ because she was small, and quiet, and enjoyed a good book. The sisters joked that Little Mouse’d probably outlive them all, and she did, by many, many years. One day I saw police breaking into a cottage where I’d visited a lady only two months before, and I knew I wouldn’t be going there again.

Then there was the couple in their eighties who were delighted I was on a motorbike, and told me about their honeymoon. They’d married in 1930 and gone on honeymoon to Scotland on a bike. It’d taken four days just to get to the border, two-up on a 1920s Triumph 500, no motorways, just old roads that twisted and turned through every town, every village. That was an epic journey. I told them I’d been to Scotland and back for a rally, 900 miles in a weekend – they were so impressed and insisted on coming out to see the bike when I left. All three of us were grinning from ear to ear as I pulled away, but I never saw them again – by the next year they’d both gone. I never saw the 94-year-old ex-nurse again



either – not because she died, I’m pleased to say, she simply didn’t need my help.

I also did the fraud visits, and riding the bike and wearing the leather helped with these. I wasn’t what people expected – I wasn’t the man-from-the-council-in-a-suit, I was a bloke on a motorbike, one of them. I was never offered tea and biscuits on these visits, though – drugs, yes, but not tea and biscuits.

I even made a one-man raid on four flats above a shop. The landlord was as dodgy as hell, and we thought the shop was a front for money laundering, and there were questions over the alleged tenants. Were they really there? Were they who they said they were? I knocked on the door of the second-floor flat, and a young woman, 19 or 20 at a guess, opened the door. She was rocking a punky-biker-chick look; cropped, spikey red hair, kohl eye makeup, baggy jumper, black mini skirt, holed tights. I explained who I was and why I was there, and she leant nonchalantly on the doorframe, and looked me up and down. “You’d better come

in,” she said, and led me towards the sitting room. In the doorway she looked over her shoulder and said: “Do you want to see my tarantula?” Her eyes went wide as she purred the words: “It’s very red... and very hairy.” She licked her lips, and sashayed into the room.

I made a noise that may’ve been “Aaauuuuhhhh.” I hadn’t been trained for moments like this. “I think we’d better do the forms first,” was the best I could, somewhat pompously, manage. Well, we did the forms, and she was legit; was who she said she was. And she did show me her tarantula, and it was very red and very hairy. She offered to let me stroke it, but I declined as its eight hairy red legs were creeping slowly up her arm. You got to see life in the Council Housing Department.

Even that wasn’t my all-time favourite visit. No, that happened many years later, and was one of my last. A woman living in a caravan was applying to move to a council flat. I interviewed the woman in the office, and she’d seen me as a small, bald, middle-

aged, a very obvious council worker, in a collar, tie and jacket. I had to visit the caravan to check it was where she lived and to see that it wasn’t suitable, but she didn’t want her landlord to know she’d applied to the Council. When we arranged the visit, she looked me up and down and asked: “Could you try to not look like a man from the council when you call?”

“I’ll do my best,” I said.

I rode the bike down the lane past her landlord’s bungalow and, spraying gravel, pulled to a stop at the caravan, blipped the throttle, and killed the engine. I saw her staring out of a window, looking worried, so I pulled off my helmet, grinned and waved. As I walked up to the caravan the door opened. The woman looked at the bike, and looked me up and down. She took in the boots, the jacket, the helmet, the shaved head. “You look nothing like a Council worker!” It’s one of the nicest things anyone’s ever said to me. 

DRIFT SNOWBARGER
ILLUSTRATIONS BY
LOUISE LIMB

HENRY COLE TOUR

Henry Cole's doing another theatre tour this year, and 16 dates across the UK're already confirmed. The dates for May and June are:

Wed 14 May – Queens Theatre, Barnstaple (01271 316523)

Thurs 15 May – Town Hall, Launceston (01566 773693)

Fri 16 May – Palace Theatre, Paignton (01803 665800)

Sun 1 June – Villa Gaiety Douglas, I.O.M. (01624 600555)

He'll share tales from his remarkable career and life, photos from his personal album, outtakes from the TV, and a chance to say things he hasn't been allowed to say on air, and he'll mingle with fans after each show. To get tickets, contact the venues on the numbers above, or go to **www.henrycole.tv**

As well as that, Roadskin, the respected British motorcycle apparel brand, will be sponsoring the tour, and offering the chance to win a pair of Meet & Greet tickets at a number



of the venues where you can meet Henry and his oppo Steve Parrish in person and be part of a truly memorable evening. Keep an eye on Roadskin's social media channels for details on how to enter the giveaway, or go to **www.roadskin.co.uk**

THAMES VALLEY COALITION



As we all know, unfortunately, motorcycle clubs often get a bad reputation through various platforms. However, when you see them out in groups, this is not usually the case – more often than not, they're on a mission to raise money for one or more charities.

The Thames Valley Coalition of Motorcycle Clubs (TVC) have been raising money for their three chosen charities (the Ollie Young Foundation, Bikers Against Child Abuse, and the National Association for Bikers with

a Disability), and have raised £2,250, giving £750 to each well-deserving charity. They accomplished this through selling raffle tickets with donated prizes from each club, organising ride-outs, and participating in various other events throughout the year. Based in Reading and the surrounding Thames Valley areas, including Reading, Newbury, Thatcham, Andover and north Hampshire, the TVC comprise of several motorcycle clubs, including HAMC Wessex, Fukarwe MC, Savages MC, 20-22 Savage Support Crew, Baphomet Brotherhood, Wolfriders MCC, Take A Chance, Moctar RC, Reading MAG, B.A.C.A. (Bikers Against Child Abuse), and the White Knights.

Check them out on Facebook at TVC Ride Out & Events.

LAST CHANCE TO SEE...

Well until the autumn anyway... the last few dates for the sand racing at Mablethorpe in Lincs are 2 March, 16 March and 30 March, and entry for spectators costs nowt (and there're food places along the prom.

It's a spectacle well worth seeing (especially when the tide starts to come in), and you can get more info' from **www.mablethorpesandracing.co.uk**



OILY RAG CLOTHING

I don't know if you know, but Oily Rag Clothing's had a change of ownership. In April '24, Archie Mann and his brother-in-law Brynley took it over after a long series of conversations with Dave and Lyn, the previous owners, and're planning on building the brand still further.

Firstly and foremost, Oily Rag is a graphic print clothing brand rooted in the spirit of motorbike culture, and within their retail store in Gloucester they have a destination/coffee shop/hangout as they're big on community and put that at the front of everything they do. They have an extensive range of cool tees and other clothing and accessories, and're well worth popping along to if you haven't already.

They're based at Unit 9 on the Rockhaven Industrial Estate in Triangle Park on Metz Way (GL1 1AJ) or you can go to their website at **www.oilyrag.com** or check them out on Facebook or X.



HARDY JOHNSON ART

Hardy Johnson is an Army veteran and amateur artist based in North Yorkshire who got back into drawing during Covid, and specialises in the Kustom Kulture style. He's sold art all over the world (USA, Australia, New Zealand and Europe), designed drag racing team logos, and offers prints. He does most of his work on A3 in ink, pencil, marker or watercolour, and each commission gets a digital copy of their work as well as the original.

Check out his stuff on Facebook (HJ Art) and on Instagram (@hj_art925), and email him at hardyjohnson@hotmail.co.uk



THE GREAT TOMMY SLEEPOUT

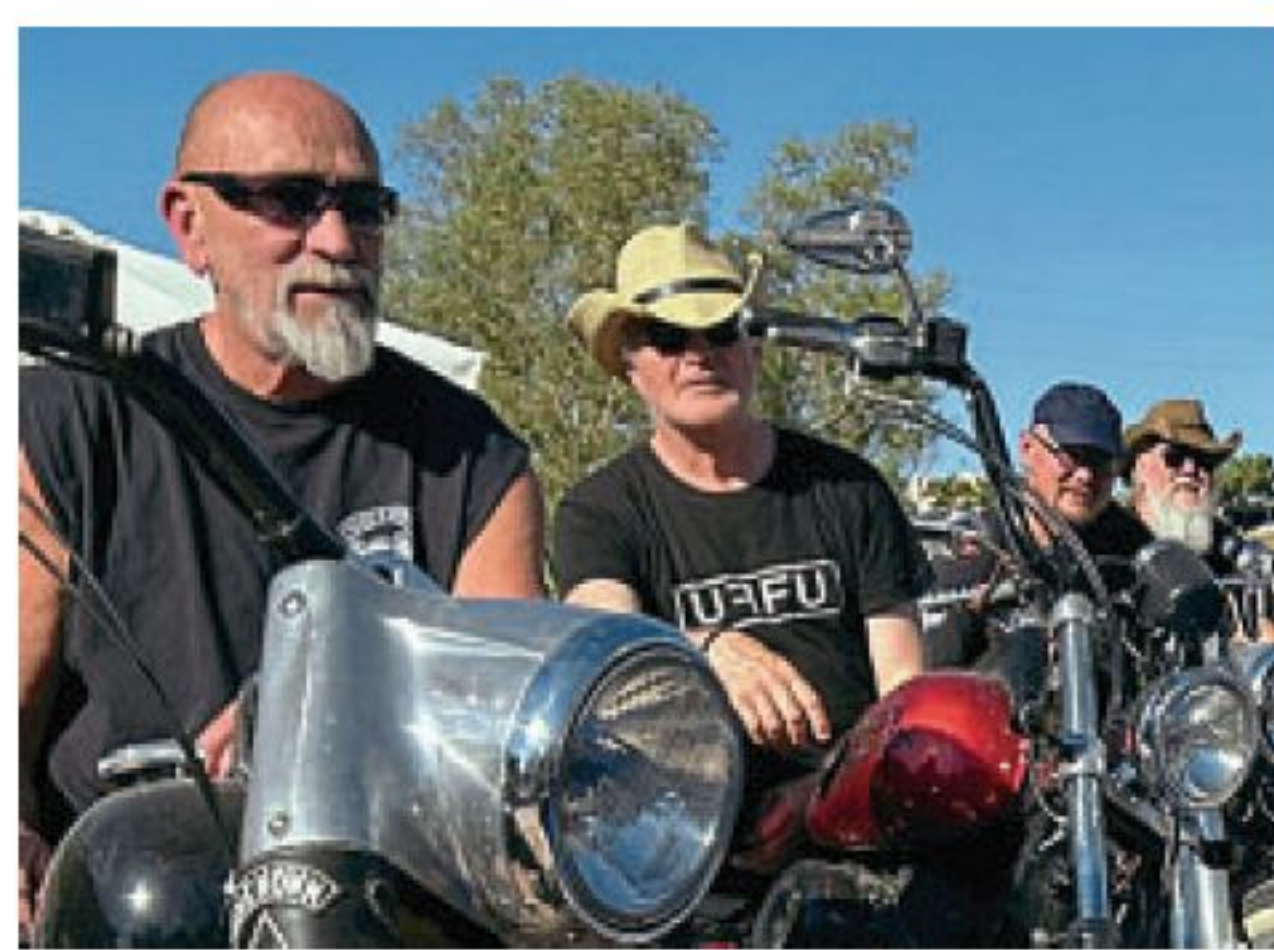
If you'd like to help raise money for our veterans, who are often treated shockingly by the powers that be once they've left the services, the QRRRA (Queen's Regimental Riders Association) are holding an event on 15 March that'll be right up your street.

The Great Tommy Sleepout will be at the QRRRA Clubhouse on Kennels Field on Homestall Road in Sittingbourne, Kent (ME9 0BE), and it'll be a chance to party with other like-minded souls and raise a bit o' dosh for those who need it, too. There'll be food and a bar, a bit of entertainment, and more, and you can get more info' from www.qrra.co.uk or Facebook.

MR C BAND

The Mr. C Band started off as a group of like-minded friends making music in a welding shop purely for the love of it. Soon tiring of playing covers, and seeing a lack of dedicated biker songs, they swiftly grew into a four-piece rock n' roll biker band, writing and playing their own music revolving around bikes and the biker lifestyle, with song titles like Ride My Triumph, Cruise Control, Vision Starts To Blur, Straight White Lines, and many more.

Check them out on Spotify, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram, or go to their website at www.mrcband.com



GINGER GARAGE



Ginger Garage Products is a small bespoke company based in south Warwickshire who make distinctive resin skull-shaped helmet holders, either wall mounted or in desk/shelf form,

for any biker, petrol head, cosplayer or hat addict. They're made from hard resin, mounted on steel rods and plate, painted black, and with a welded spark plug accessory, and there're nine distinct designs to choose from. They also make bespoke cabinets and bars from original



45-gallon oil drums, with a wide selection of different oil manufacturers' logos on them.

Check out their stuff, and their shop truck (a '68 Dodge A100 panel van), and their CX500 café racer, too, at their website at www.gingegarageproducts.com



NEW SPEED TRIPLE 1200 RS

It's thirty years (well, 31 actually) since Triumph Motorcycles launched their factory take on the streetfighter, and they've just unveiled the new Speed Triple 1200 RS for 2025, with unmatched triple power and torque, peerless handling, and even more state-of-the-art rider-focused technology.

The 1160cc triple engine delivers 183PS (180hp) at 10,750rpm, and 128Nm (94ft/lb) of torque at 8,750rpm, and Öhlins latest-generation

SmartEC3 semi-active suspension, Brembo Stylema calipers, and Pirelli Diablo Supercorsa SP V3 tyres take care of the handling.

Prices start at £17,495 OTR, in three eye-catching colours (Jet Black, Granite/Diablo Red, Granite/Performance Yellow, all with striking new graphics), and with more than 25 optional accessories, and bikes'll be arriving in dealerships from April.

Find out more at triumphmotorcycles.co.uk

Stuff

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MT BRAKER HELMET

The new Braker SV is an entry-level model in the sport-touring market, featuring cutting-edge solutions such as the MT-QVSS visor attachment system, a housing for the UCS intercom, and a quick-actuating sun visor. It boasts a triple front ventilation system, and a rear spoiler with an air extraction system to enhance interior airflow, weighs just 1,600gm, and is



visor-insert compatible with Fogoff FOG010 and Pinlock DKS435.

Available in all the usual sizes, and in a variety of colours (these funky

tribal designs're called Zebra), they cost just £119.99 from anywhere that stocks the MT Helmets range or www.oxfordproducts.com

WEISE PLUS-SIZE JACKET

Weise's popular Core jacket's now available in 'plus' sizes, making finding the right fit much easier for bigger bikers – whereas a 'regular' Large'd be a 44" chest, in 'plus' sizing it's a much more generous 52.5", but the arms and torso are the same length as a regular jacket, so everything stays in proportion.



Rated AA for safety, it comes with CE shoulder and elbow armour, and a back protector, too, a waterproof/windproof/breathable liner, a removable 75gsm quilted thermal lining, and zippered vents. There's plenty of adjustment at the waist, sleeves and collar (fleece-lined and Neoprene-trimmed for a comfy, weatherproof fit), and two handy front pockets, and a large rear map pocket, offer plenty of space for the essentials.

The Weise Core Plus retails at just at £199.99 including VAT, is covered by Weise's two-year warranty for complete peace of mind, and it's available in blue or black in Plus Sizes L-5XL, from anywhere that stocks the Weise range or www.weiseclothing.com

TEXAS LEATHER FUEL FRIEND CANISTER HOLDERS

These Zodiac-exclusive Texas Leather real leather Fuel Friend canister holders're available for either one litre or one-and-a-half litre Fuel Friend bottles, and they strap easily to your bike or to one of the Texas Leather bags with fitted mounting straps.

Get yours from anywhere that stocks the Zodiac range or www.zodiac.nl



OXFORD GRIP SLEEVES

These Oxford Grip Sleeves're a soft Neoprene over-grip that simply slides over your current grips to help reduce vibration and increase comfort. They fit all grips 1.25 inches to 1.45 inches, and can be trimmed to length, and cost just £9.99 from anywhere that stocks the Oxford Products range or www.oxfordproducts.com



CLARKE IMPACT WRENCH

The Clarke CCIW160 is a lightweight, more affordable, compact wrench with a half-inch drive tool, two 2.0Ah batteries, and a charger, and offers a max torque of 160Nm and a No Load Speed of 0-2200rpm, so is ideal for most household automotive tasks.

It costs £119.98 from any branch of Machine Mart or www.machinemart.co.uk



CIRO CHICANE GRIPS

These Chicane Grips give a superior feeling of control, and excellent vibration dampening, in a cool-looking package. They're made of EPDM rubber pads on a metal tube over a polymer base, and'll prove a super-durable item that'll give years of excellent performance, and there're also Throttle Wings, available separately, to rest your wrist(s) on to reduce fatigue.

They fit all Shovelhead, Ironhead Sportster, Evolution Big Twin, and Twin Cams with cable-operated throttles, and Throttle-By-Wire 2016-2017 110CI Dynas, 2011-2014 CVO Softails, all 2015 to present Softails, all 2009 to present Trikes, all 2008 to present 96/103/107/114CI



Touring models, and 2018-2023 117CI Touring models, too.

Get yours from anywhere that stocks the Zodiac range or www.zodiac.nl



MERLIN BADOU JACKET

The Badou is a Kevlar jacket, is CE AA-certified, and converts into a lightweight windbreaker once the sleeves are detached, so is perfect for summer adventures when temperatures fluctuate. It has D3O armour in the elbows and shoulders, mesh ventilation panels, YKK zips, two zipped lower pockets and a zipped rear storage pocket (ideal for stashing the sleeves), elasticated cuffs, a draw-cord adjustable hem, and a leather pipe collar.

Available in sizes S to 4XL, it costs £229.99 from anywhere that stocks the Merlin range or www.merlinbikegear.shop

SIDI URBAN BOOTS

Sidi's introduced three brand-new casually-styled urban riding boots, each with its own unique design, crafted to deliver exceptional comfort, protection and style, both on and off the bike.

The Urbex WP is crafted from premium lightweight materials to offer a perfect balance of durability and flexibility, and features a soft, yet highly resilient, upper, and's

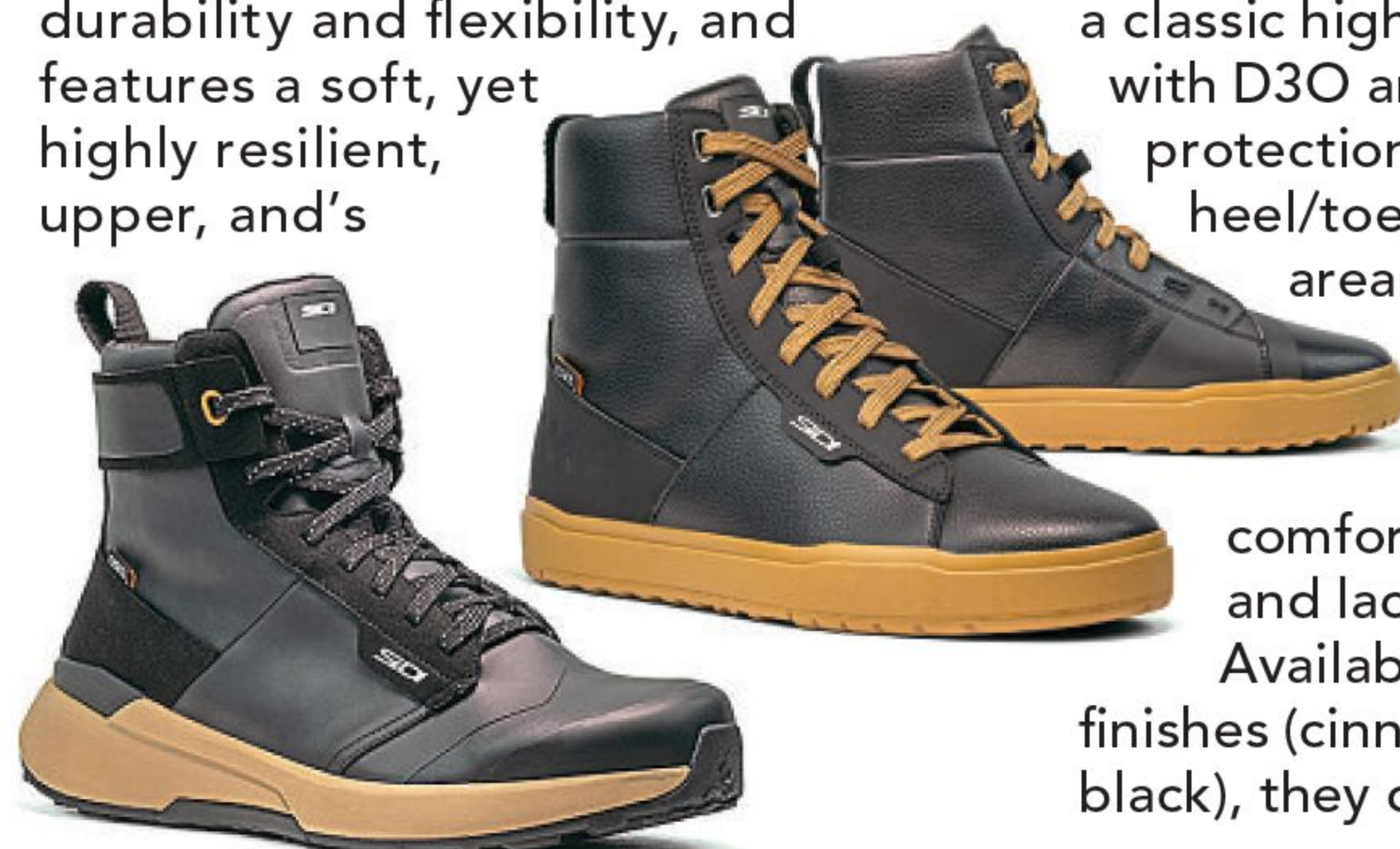
available in two finishes (grey and burgundy), with waterproof/breathable membranes, D3O impact protection, lace closure, and a supportive walking sole for all-day comfort. Available now, they cost £214.99.

Next up is the ARX WP High, a trainer-style boot in a classic high-top look with D3O ankle impact protection, reinforced heel/toe/gear-shift areas, waterproof/breathable membranes, Vibram

comfort soles, and lace closure. Available in two finishes (cinnamon, and black), they cost £199.99.

Finally, the Nucleus WP High, designed for rugged outdoor styling and everyday practicality. They, too, feature D3O impact technology, a reinforced toe, an all-weather breathable membrane to keep feet dry and comfortable in any conditions, and Vibram soles for providing exceptional grip and cushioning. Available now in black or grey, they, too, cost £199.99.

Get yours from anywhere that stocks the Sidi range or www.sidiselect.co.uk



Letters

NEED TO AGREE, OR EVEN DISAGREE, WITH SOMETHING YOU'VE SEEN IN THE MAG? HEARD A BLOODY AWFUL JOKE YOU THINK WE SHOULD GROAN AT? EMAIL NIK@BACKSTREETHEROES.COM OR SEND IT SNAILMAIL TO THE ADDRESS SOMEWHERE IN THE MAG!

star
LETTER

The best letter each month over the winter wins a BSH hoodie



White House Farm, Rettendon, near Chelmsford - well worth a look if you're ever down that way.

We also have Blue Knights MC (police), Green Knights MC (military), and White Knights

MC (medics) in our family that all use differing images of St. George the cross, and none of our clubs or chapters are racist, and I take offence at the inference. Check out our website Red Knights MC England 2, and also Red Knights MC European Association.

Keep the faith, all the best.

BOB V.

We had a number of letters along this theme, and used Bob's cos his put it in the most eloquent language



DEAR BSH,

I read with interest the letter from Dan in the latest issue, and can't believe the weird attitude. I belong to an international fire-fighters club, the Red Knights MC, and have done so for many years. Our chapter patch, England 2, displays the knight and red cross of St. George, and our 3-piece backpatch clearly shows that any fire-fighter, serving or retired, is free to join us no matter what race, colour, or religious belief. We're not a 1% club, but are family-orientated and raise money for children's burns units all over the country. We also have a permanent memorial site and remembrance wall for fallen fire-fighters that anyone can visit at



DEAR BSH,

There seem to be a few events out there with a bit of an exclusive attitude based on money. Two years ago, I think, I was out and about on the bus (1980 Gold Wing), and my plan was to trundle over from Bristol to the Ace Cafe for Fizzie Day, using A-roads because motorways're boring. Anyway, I got there on the hottest day since hot days began, only to find I'd got the date wrong so, a little musing later, I thought I'd trundle up the Trip Out for a visit for a few hours before the ride home. Off I went and, an indeterminate time later, I got there and heaved-to at the reception tent, and explained my situation and intention, only to be told I'd have to pay the full £40 day cost even though I'd only be there for an hour or two to mosey about and have a cider. Reasons given were stuff like the show costs, and also that I might stay and camp.

Now, I know shows cost, I get that, but I hadn't packed even my invisible tent. What bugged me was the attitude: "If you don't like it, go home." This ain't playing nice, and is a bit sad really. There was a sign saying 'Stick It to The Man' - seems like The Man's running these shows.

RICH STILING

Not excusing it, of course, but because *The Trip Out* allows vans and cars, I can see them thinking that perhaps your camping gear was already there, and you were just trying to get in for less, yeah? A solution might've been to charge you the £40, yes, but then given you it/some back when you did leave later that afternoon?

DEAR BSH,

Norm's Devil's Advocate is boss! He makes all the thoughts inside my head, hilarious. Still a great mag after more than 40 years, don't stop having fun.

AL GARDNER

DEAR BSH,

Motorpsycho: The road is a savage place. Naked human nature is best observed here. Feeling strong in its cage. Look inside yourself and see. I ride by what are now just obstacles in my way. Just paper cut-outs of yesterday. Blown away.

When the summer arrives, I can really fly again, without caution. Fast through country lanes flowing like water into tributaries across the hot black tar. Scribing its language.

Hunkered down into the road, reading what was written before. The light firing through the hedgerow, flickering shadows across my face, cutting with the wind. Patterns dance on my vision like the flicker of an old film, stained. I roll hard into the corners, cutting into the hedgerow again, brushing my shoulder. Rattling acceleration into the immediate. The light homogenises and blinds as I straighten up and out of the corner. I hit a wall of warm air upon sunlight. At this moment, in a blurred focus, I wonder with wet eyes if I have just died.

At this speed death would be seamless, I had always told myself. Maybe it was. What does it matter. I ride on faster hoping the next corner leads me further in.

It never does. But upon the razor's edge I was free from the cages.

I'll meet you on the road.

JAMES LINNELL

DEAR BSH,

Pic of my old Ironhead Sporty, completely built in the garage, made the frame, trailey forks (them days you made do), usual lawnmower petrol tank as oil tank, and everything else made to fit. Beside it, my old H-D45. I sold that to my cousin. It was a 1945 45, in a hardtailed BSA A10 frame, delugged, with a Triumph Slick-shift preunit gearbox – had the engine sprocket made up to match the clutch chainwheel, and lots of other stuff. You featured it in the magazine many years back... I had hair then.

JOHN TILLEY



DEAR BSH,

Looking around in the garage the other day, I spotted these – a few memories there. I still have every copy of BSH from the start.

TIM C

Where did the years go, eh?



DEAR BSH,

Issue 488, John Dunne's 750 Kwack high-neck chop appeared on page 61 as well. I claim my prize! Whaddayamean entries closed yesterday? Brother, has that bike stood the test of time!

TOM

Yeah, those were the last 'Down the Back' pics, and leaving the chop that's now John's out would've meant there were only nine pics rather than ten, and that would've meant an asymmetrical design to the pages... honest!

DEAR BSH,

Really enjoyed your features on the NCC in issue 491. Until last year I hadn't been to an NCC show as I thought they were 'closed events', but at the Aberdare races I got talking to a Powys NCC member who said they're public, and listed on their website, so I got to enjoy the friendly one-day event at Bow St. near Aberystwyth in July.

It may be that other BSH readers're missing out on seeing some great bikes, all because the message hasn't got out.

WYN, WEST WALES

DEAR BSH,

My subscription copy came this morning - are the included adverts suggesting your readership is of a certain age?

GLENN FAULKNER

*Eh? Eh?
Wossat? Speak up, young man!*



THE WORLD'S BIGGEST CLASSIC BIKE SHOW IS BACK!

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- EARLY BIRD ADVANCE (FROM 8:00AM) - £9
- UNDER 16S FREE

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RACECOURSE, WARWICKSHIRE,
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AUTOJUMBLE.INFO

Events

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SEEN BY EVERYONE IN BIKERDOM! EMAIL THE INFO TO
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MARCH

2 March: Bideford Classic Motorcycle Show at Bideford Pannier Market, Market Pl, Bideford, Devon (EX39 2DR). Tickets £5. More info' from www.bidefordbikeshow.org

2 March: Mablethorpe Sand Racing at The Beach, Mablethorpe, Lincs. More info' from www.mablethorpesandracing.co.uk

2 March: Bike Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

2 March: Motorcycle Ride-In Day at The Classic Motor Hub, Old Walls, Ablington, Cirencester, Gloucs (GL7 5FF). More info' from www.classicmotorhub.com

6 March: Krazy Horse Film Night (Rush) at the Abbeygate Cinema, Hatter St, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk (IP33 1LZ). More info' from www.krazyhorse.co.uk

8 March: MR Autojumble at New Marske Sports & Social Club, Gurney St, New Marske, Redcar, N. Yorks (TS11 8EQ). Tickets £5. More info' from Facebook.

8 March: Kempton Park Autojumble at Kempton Park, Staines Road East, Sunbury on Thames, Middlesex (TW16 5AQ). More info' from www.kemptonautojumble.co.uk

8-9 March: Scottish Motorcycle Show at the Royal Highland Centre, Newbridge, Ingliston, Edinburgh, Scotland (EH28 8NB). More info' from www.thescottishmotorcycleshow.com

9 March: Classic Bike Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

9 March: Motorcycle Rideout from Bournemouth Kawasaki, Wimborne Rd, Moordown, Bournemouth, Dorset (BH9 2DE) at 9.30am. More info' from Facebook.

15 March: The Great Tommy Sleepout at the QRR Clubhouse, Kennels Field, Homestall Rd, Sittingbourne, Faversham, Kent (ME9 0BE). More info' from www.qrra.co.uk

16 March: Mablethorpe Sand Racing at The Beach, Mablethorpe, Lincs.

More info' from www.mablethorpesandracing.co.uk

16 March: Bike Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

22 March: VMCC Kent's Vintage Motorcycle Jumble at the Village Hall, Dunkirk, Canterbury, Kent (ME13 9LF). Tickets £5, stalls £10. More info' from 07789 606686 or redcherrycam@hotmail.co.uk

22 March: Barnstormers' Fund-Raising Day at Barnstormers Motorcycles, West Henderson's Wynd, Dundee, Scotland (DD1 5BT). More info' from www.barnstormers.co.uk

22 March: Open Day at Newmarket Harley-Davidson, Oaks Drive, Newmarket, Suffolk (CB8 7SX). More info' from www.lind.co.uk

22 March: Mary Rose Easter Egg Run from The Square, Wickham, Fareham, Hants (PO17 5JT) at noon. More info' from Facebook.

22 March: Unicorn Diner's Easter Egg Run from The Unicorn Diner, Hoddins Way, Long Sutton, Lincs (PE12 9JB) at 9.30am. More info' from 07498 738929 or Facebook.

23 March: Custom & Cruiser Bike Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

23 March: Old Boot Bikers' In The Barn Meet at Dane End Christmas Tree Farm, High View, Farm Green End Lane, Dane End, Herts (SG12 0FF). More info' from Facebook.

29 March: Chopper Club Wales' Autojumble & Custom Show at the South Wales clubhouse, Margam, SA13 2BA. More info' from 07452 727227 or Facebook.

30 March: Overland & Adventure Bike Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

30 March: Mablethorpe Sand Racing at The Beach, Mablethorpe, Lincs. More info' from www.mablethorpesandracing.co.uk

30 March: Ardingly Classic Bike Show & Jumble at the South of England Showground, Selsfield Rd, Haywards Heath, West Sussex (RH17 6TL). Tickets £7. More info' from www.elkpromotions.co.uk

30 March: Newbury Harley Autojumble at Woodside Farm, Marlston Road, Hermitage, Thatcham, Berks (RG18 9TG). Tickets £5, no pitch fees. More info' from 07388 656936 or Facebook.

30 March: Normous Newark Autojumble at The Showground, Drove Lane, Winthorpe, Newark, Notts (NG24 2NY). More info' from www.newarkautojumble.co.uk

APRIL

4-6 April: Oddballs MCC's Unfrozen Balls Up Rally at Sleaf Airfield, Harmer Hill, Shrewsbury, Shrops (SY4 3HE). Tickets £20. More info' from 07592 298502 or Facebook.

4-6 April: Malvern Hills Rally at The Lower Lode Inn, Bishops Walk, Tewkesbury, Gloucs (GL19 4RE). More info' from Facebook.

4-6 April: Matt Black Rat Spring Meet at North Dorset RFC, Longbury Hill Ln, Gillingham, Dorset (SP8 5SY). Tickets £20. More info' from Facebook.

5 April: Bear Town Bikers' Charity Bike Show at Congleton Cricket Club, Booth St, Congleton, Cheshire (CW12 4DG). Entry by donation. More info' from Facebook.

5 April: Chopper Builders UK's Willingham Woods Rideout from the Green Hut Café, Worksop Road, Ollerton, Notts (NG22 9DR) at 10am. More info' from Facebook.

6 April: Scooter Sunday & Raleigh Chopper Meet at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

6 April: Sunbeam MCC's Brooklands Day at Brooklands Museum, Brooklands Drive, Weybridge, Surrey (KT13 0SL). More info' from www.sunbeam-mcc.co.uk

6 April: Whitstable Toy Run Association's Egg Run from Tankerton Road Car Park, Tankerton Rd, Whitstable, Kent (CT5 2AS) at noon. More info' from Facebook.

6 April: Lupton House Bike & Trike Show at Lupton House, Brixham Road, Churston Ferrers, Devon (TQ5 0LD). More info' from Facebook.

Events

6 April: Black Shuck MCC's Easter Egg Run from The Kingfisher, Hawthorn Dr, Chantry, Ipswich, Suffolk (IP2 0QG) at 9am. More info' from Facebook.

6 April: Suffolk Classic Motorcycle Show at the Stour Valley Business Park, Brundon Ln, Sudbury, Suffolk (CO10 7GB). More info' from suffolkmotorcycleshow@gmail.com or Facebook.

12 April: Triumph Factory Experience Easter Egg Run from the Triumph Factory, Normandy Way, Hinckley, Leics (LE10 3BZ) at 9.30am. More info' from www.triumphmotorcycles.co.uk

12-13 April: Kickback at the Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Worcs (WR13 6NW). More info' from www.Kickbackshow.com

13 April: Kawasaki Sunday at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

13 April: Baphomet Brotherhood's Nawty Dog Run from Honesty at The Base, Communications Rd, Greenham Business Park, Thatcham, Berks (RG19 6HW) at 10am. More info' from Facebook.

13 April: Beaky's Harley Bootsale at Pippbrook Car Park, Reigate Rd, Dorking, Surrey (RH4 1SN) from 8am. More info' from www.beakysmotorcycles.com

13 April: CRAG (Coventry Riders Action Group)'s Easter Egg Run from Bikers Paradise, Portway Close, Coventry, West Mids (CV4 9UY) at 11am. More info' from www.coventryridersactiongroup.co.uk or Facebook.

13 April: White Horse Custom & Classic Bike Show at TTT Motorcycles, Bulmer Road Industrial Estate, Bulmer Rd, Sudbury, Suffolk (CO10 7HJ). More info' from Facebook.

13 April: Squire's Egg Run from Squires Cafe Bar, Newthorpe Lane, Newthorpe, Yorks (LS25 5LX) at 8am. More info' from www.squires-cafe.co.uk

13 April: Cambridge Bikers' Easter Egg Run from La Pergola at The Wheatsheaf, Cambridge Rd, Harlton, Cambs (CB23 1HA) at 9am. More info' from Facebook.

18 April: Berkshire Egg Run from Stadium Way Industrial Estate, Reading, Berks (RG30 6BX) at 11.30am. More info' from 07827 475391 or egggrun@tvvultures.co.uk

18 April: M&M Motorcycles' Birthday Party at M&M Motorcycles, Unit 2a, The BP Service Station, A10, Waterbeach, Cambs (CB25 9PG). More inf' from Facebook.

19 April: PML Motorcycles' Easter Bike Show at PML Motorcycles, Unit 3, Woodland Park Ind Est, Shortthorn Rd, Norwich, Norfolk (NR10 5NU). More info' from www.pmlmotorcycles.com

20 April: Rocket III Owners Club at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

20 April: Black Widows Bikers Sussex's Easter Egg Run from Diplocks Café, Diplocks Way, Hailsham, E. Sussex (BN27 3JF) at 8am. More info' from www.blackwidowsbikers.com or Facebook.

20 April: Fort Paull American Car/Bike & Hot Rod Show at Fort Paull, Battery Rd, Paull, Hull, Yorks (HU12 8FP). More info' from Facebook.

20 April: Grumpy's Pre-'75 Classics & Motorcycle Bash at Grumpy Bastards Motorcycle Garage, Canal Street, Longport, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs (ST5 4LU). Free entry. More info' from www.grumpys.uk

20 April: Durham Easter Egg Run from Tesco Extra, Dragonville Industrial Estate, Dragons Lane, Durham, Co. Durham (DH1 2XA) at 10am. More info' from Facebook.

20 April: Halfway Heroes MCC's Easter Egg Run from The Railway Inn, Station Rd, Thorpe on the Hill, Lincs (LN6 9BS) at 9am. More info' from www.halfway-heroes.co.uk or Facebook.

20 April: Mods & Rockers at Revved Up, High St, Walton on the Naze, Essex (CO14 AT). More info' from Facebook.

20 April: Reading MAG's Bike Show at Burghfield Community Sports Association, James Ln, Burghfield, Reading, Berks (RG30 3RS) from 10.30am. More info' from Facebook.

21 April: Ashford Classic Motorcycle Jumble at Ashford Livestock Market, Orbital Park, Ashford, Kent (TN24 0HB). Tickets £10. More info' from www.elkpromotions.co.uk

21 April: Red Marley Hill Climb at Walsgrove Farm, Great Witley, Worcs (WR6 6JJ). More info' from www.redmarleyhillclimb.co.uk

21 April: Bideford Bike Show's Bunnies on Bikes Easter Egg Run from Bideford Quay Car Park at 9.30am. More info' from www.bidefordbikeshow.org or Facebook.

25-27 April: Zombie Chopper Run at a site in Spain. More info' from www.zombiechopperun.com

26 April: 2022's For the Love of Bikes 125-Friendly Run from The Angel Inn, High St, Andover, Hants (SP10 1ND) at 10am. Tickets £10. More info' from Facebook.

26 April: St George's Day Bike Show at The Bell, Main Rd, Kesgrave, Ipswich, Suffolk (IP5 1AA). More info' from Facebook.

26 April: Hampshire Ariel OC's Autojumble at The Four Horseshoes, Haygate, Lord Wandsworth College, Hook, Hamps (RG29 1TA). More info' from 07810 111222 or rs.armstrong@talktalk.net

26 April: Newmarket Harley-Davidson's Birthday Party at Newmarket Harley-Davidson, Oaks Drive, Newmarket, Suffolk (CB8 7SX). More info' from www.lind.co.uk

26 April: West London Harley Riders' St Georges Day Bike Show at Hayes Cricket Club, Wood End, Hayes, Middlesex (UB3 2RJ). More info' from 07747 005199 or Facebook.

26 April: Dusty Customs' Dusty's Charity Rock Night at the Longmor Hall, Banff Rd, Keith, Moray, Scotland (AB55 5HA). Tickets £15. More info' from 07724 136822 or Facebook.

27 April: Yamaha Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

27 April: Royal Enfield Day at the Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum, Bashley Cross Road, near New Milton, Hamps (BH25 5SZ). More info' from www.sammymiller.co.uk

27 April: Firefighters Custom Bike Show at a site on Manston Rd, Manston, Ramsgate, Kent (CT12 5DF). Tickets £5. More info' from www.firefighters66.com or Facebook.

27 April: Salisbury Five Valleys Charity Run from The Barford Inn, Barford St Martin, Salisbury, Wilts (SP3 4AB) at 9am. More info' from Facebook.

27 April: Motorcycle Meet at The Ambience Café, Riverside Park, Eaton Ford, St. Neots, Cambs (PE19 7SA). More info' from Facebook.

MAY

1 May-5 May: Stan & Co's Over the Edge Rally at a site on the Isle of Wight. Tickets £40 prebook or £45 on gate. More info' from 07815 692349 or stannjanebaker@gmail.com

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2-4 May: Yorkshire MAG's Into The Valley Rally. More info' from www.mapevents.co.uk

2-4 May: Pendragon MCC's Dragonfire Rally at The Chequers Inn, Pertenhall Road, Keysoe, Beds (MK44 2HR). Tickets £20 before 31 March, £25 after. More info' from Facebook.

2-4 May: Patriots MC's Anniversary Party at The Patriot, Main St, Crumlin, Newport, Gwent (NP11 4PT). More info' from www.patriotsmc.co.uk or Facebook.

2-5 May: The Despatch Rally at Mappercombe Farm, Nettlecombe, Bridport, Dorset (DT6 3SS). More info' from www.despatchrally.co.uk

3 May: Revved Up Classics' Car, Bike & Scooter Show at Vintage Metals Ltd, Unit 1G1, Mushet Business Centre, Crucible Cl, Coleford, Gloucs (GL16 8RE). More info' from www.vintagemetals.co.uk or Facebook.

4 May: Italian Bike Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

4 May: Beer, Bikes & Bands at The Banham Barrel, The Appleyard, Kenninghall Rd, Banham, Norfolk (NR16 2HE). Free entry. More info' from Facebook.

4 May: Spring Autojumble at the Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum, Bashley Cross Road,

near New Milton, Hamps (BH25 5SZ). More info' from www.sammymiller.co.uk

4 May: Normous Newark Autojumble at The Showground, Drove Lane, Winthorpe, Newark, Notts (NG24 2NY). More info' from www.newarkautojumble.co.uk

5 May: 2-Stroke & Smoke SC's Mods & Rockers Invasion at Gt Yarmouth seafront, Collingwood Rd, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk (NR30 4LR). More info' from www.scooterrally.co.uk

5 May: Stone Circle Bike Show at Supermarine Sports Club, Supermarine Rd, Swindon, Wilts (SN3 4BZ). More info' from Facebook.

9-11 May: Leyland Eagles' 40th Anniversary Rally at the Canberra Club, Samlesbury Aerodrome, Myerscough Road, Blackburn, Lancs (BB2 7LF). Tickets £20. More info' from Facebook.

9-11 May: HDRCGB Region 14's Wessex Wobbler Rally at a site in Chippenham, Wilts (SN14 0YZ). Tickets £20 members or £25 non. More info' from rusticmonster@hotmail.com or Facebook.

10 May: Hemsby Wheels Fest at Long Beach Tent & Touring Site, Long Beach Estate, Hemsby, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk (NR29 4JD). More info' from Facebook.

10 May: The Early Hook Up at Mutt Motorcycles, Lifford Ln, King's Norton, Birmingham (B30 3NU). More info' from www.the-hook-up.co.uk

10 May: Wolfpack MC's Run with the Wolves from the H Café, Deacon's Garage, Oxford Rd, Dorchester, Wallingford, Oxon (OX10 7LY) at 11.30am. More info' from Facebook.

10 May: Savages MC's Charity Pub Golf from The Swallow, Pilgrims Way, Andover, Hamps (SP10 5HY) at 10am. More info' from Facebook.

10 May: Kempton Classic Bike Show at Kempton Park, Staines Road East, Sunbury on Thames, Middlesex (TW16 5AQ). More info' from www.kemptonautojumble.co.uk

10 May: Guildford H-D Autojumble at Guildford H-D, Weyvern Place Weyvern Park, Old Portsmouth Rd, Peasmarsh, Surrey (GU3 1NA). More info' from www.lind.co.uk

11 May: BMW Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

11 May: Sunbeam MCC's Ixion Cavalcade from Bexhill-on-Sea, E. Sussex. More info' from DanMoto@mail.com or www.sunbeam-mcc.co.uk

11 May: Pinewood Café Custom Bike Show at the Pinewood Bar & Café, Pinewood Leisure Centre, Old Wokingham Rd, Wokingham, Berks (RG40 3AQ). More info' from www.pinewoodbarandcafe.co.uk or Facebook.

11 May: Rickman Day at the Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum, Bashley Cross Road, near New Milton, Hamps (BH25 5SZ). More info' from www.sammymiller.co.uk

11 May: Stratford Autojumble at Stratford-upon-Avon Racecourse, Luddington Road, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warks (CV37 9SE). More info' from www.stratfordautojumble.co.uk

12-15 May: Sunbeam MCC's Shropshire Mid-Week Break at The Valley Hotel, Buildwas Rd, Ironbridge, Coalbrookdale, Telford, Shrops (TF8 7DW). More info' from pauldawnmorley@talktalk.net or www.sunbeam-mcc.co.uk

15-18 May: Biker Fest Italy at Lignano Sabbiadoro, Udine, Italy. More info' from www.bikerfest.it

16-18 May: MT Heads MCC's It's Going Down in the Lakes Again at Chester Lakes Campsite, Church Rd, Chester (CH4 9LQ). More info' from Facebook.

16-18 May: Double Trouble Rally at Court Farm Country Park, Wolverhill Rd, Banwell, Somerset (BS29 6DL). Tickets £30. More info' from www.doubletroublerally.com

17 May: Feltwell Anglo-American Car & Bike Show at The Playing Fields, Paynes Lane, Feltwell, Norfolk (IP26 4BA). More info' from www.feltwellcarshow.uk

17-18 May: Sunbeam MCC's Conyboro Run from The Six Bells, The St, Chiddingly, Lewes, E. Sussex (BN8 6HT). More info' from andy.belenkin@virginmedia.com or www.sunbeam-mcc.co.uk

17-18 May: Flying Quarter Sprint Meet at Manston Airfield, Manston Rd, Manston, Ramsgate, Kent (CT12 5BQ). More info' from www.flyingquarter.co.uk or Facebook.

18 May: Distinguished Gentleman's Ride at sites

worldwide. More info' from www.gentlemansride.com

18 May: Two-Stroke Day & Fizzy Frenzy at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

18 May: Wildlife Wiscombe Hill-Climb at Wiscombe Park, Southleigh, Devon (EX24 6JE). More info' from www.wiscombepark.co.uk

18 May: NCC Lincs' Custom Show at a site TBC. More info' from Facebook.

18 May: Air Ambulance Bike & Car Show at Joyland, Marine Parade, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk (NR30 2EH). More info' from Facebook.

18 May: Musos at The Shelley at The Shelley Arms, Old Guildford Road, Broadbridge Heath W. Sussex (RH12 3JU). More info' from Facebook.

22-25 May: Taunton MAG's Tone Vale Tea Rally at a site on the Somerset Levels (TA9 3RH). Tickets £20 prebook or £25 on gate. More info' from 07780 960869 or sarahrallytvtr@gmail.com

23-25 May: The Smoking Dog Rock & Custom Show at Bishops Auckland Rugby Club, West Mills Playing Fields, Bridge Rd, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham (DL14 7PA). Tickets £15 prebook or £20 on gate. More info' from 07931 177448 or countydurham34@yahoo.com

23-25 May: Sentinels' Piston Pendle Rally at Pendle Forest Sports Club, Old Laund Booth Playing Fields, Barrowford Rd, Fence, Burnley (BB12 9QQ). Tickets £20. More info' from sentinels@gmx.co.uk or section9@secretary.net

23-25 May: Bike Shed Moto Show at Tobacco Dock, Wapping Ln, London (E1W 2SF). More info' from www.bikeshedlondonshow.com

24 May: Big Chris' Big Bash at Keynsham Funduro, Durley Ln, Keynsham, Bristol (BS31 2AJ). Tickets £3, autojumble pitches £5. More info' from 07841 338741 or Facebook.

24 May: Bultaco Owners' Club Meet at the Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum, Bashley Cross Road, near New Milton, Hamps (BH25 5SZ). More info' from www.sammymiller.co.uk

25 May: Gold Wing Gathering at the Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum, Bashley Cross Road, near New Milton, Hamps (BH25 5SZ). More info' from www.sammymiller.co.uk

24-26 May: Sanzaru's Breach of the Peace Bike Show at Fort Purbrook, Peter Ashley Ln, Portsmouth, Hants (PO6 1BJ). Tickets £20. More info' from www.sanzaru.co.uk or Facebook.

25 May: Bideford Bike Show at The Big Sheep, Abbotsham Rd, Abbotsham, Bideford, Devon (EX39 5AP). More info' from www.bidefordbikeshow.org

25 May: RBLRB Day in aid of the Poppy Appeal at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

25 May: East Anglian Copdock Bike Show Charity Run from Copdock & Washbrook Village Hall, London Rd, Copdock, Ipswich, Suffolk (IP8 3JN) at 9am. More info' from www.eacbikeshow.co.uk

25 May: Southampton MAG Bike Show at The Hunters Inn, Cott St, Swanmore, Southampton, Hants (SO32 2PZ). Traders needed, £20 per pitch. More info' from 07954 420210 or 07554 213569.

26 May: Margate Meltdown Run at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

26 May: Ashford Classic Motorcycle Jumble at Ashford Livestock Market, Orbital Park, Ashford, Kent (TN24 0HB). Tickets £10. More info' from www.elkpromotions.co.uk

30 May-1 June: The Pott's Bike Bash at Castle Cary RFC, Brook House Field, Castle Cary, Somerset (BA7 7PF). Tickets £20 prebook or £25 on gate. More info' from potts666tcb@gmail.com

30 May-1 June: South West Chopper Fest at The Otter Vale Wild Camping, Homsleigh Barns, Honiton, Devon (EX14 9NP). Tickets £55. More info' from www.southwestchopperfest.co.uk

31 May-1 June: MC Pecquencourt's Mechanics Show at Pecquencourt, northern France. More info' from Facebook.

30 May-1 June: PILRC's Perverts in Leather Rally at the Ukrainian Youth Centre, Weston-on-Trent, Derbys (DE72 2BU). More info' from www.pilrc.org

31 May: East Coast Harley Club KL Crew's Custom Bike Show at the Gaywood Community Centre, Gaywood Park, Cemetery Dr, Gayton Rd, Gaywood, King's Lynn (PE30 4EE). More info' from Facebook.

JUNE

1 June: Sunbeam MCC's Rose of the Shires Run from Great Brington, Northants. More info' from 07850 870094 or robertbayman@btinternet.com or www.sunbeam-mcc.co.uk

1 June: VJMC & Japanese Bike Bonanza at the Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum, Bashley Cross Road, near New Milton, Hamps (BH25 5SZ). More info' from www.sammymiller.co.uk

2 June: MAD Sunday & MAG London at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

5-8 June: Unwanted MCC's Bike, Trike & Custom Show at The Rockbar, Shobnall Sports & Social Club, Shobnall Road, Burton upon Trent, Staffs (DE14 2BB). More info from www.unwantedmcc.co.uk

6-8 June: Chopper Freakers Band's Chopperfest at Blénod-lès-Pont-à-Mousson, 54700, France. More info' from Facebook.

7 June: Chopper Club S. Ireland's Day Show at The Welcome Inn, Rockfield, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, Eire (X35 TX36). More info' from Facebook.

7 June: Brothers in Arms MCC's D-Day Rally at Loch Lomond Rugby Club, Beechwood Dr, Alexandria, West Dunbartonshire (G83 9LY). More info' from Facebook.

7 June: Bikes, Beer & Big Hearts at The Stepping Stones, Westhumble Street Westhumble, Dorking, Surrey (RH5 6BS). More info' from 01306 889832 or www.steppingstonesdorking.co.uk

7 June: NCC Somerset's Shootin' the Breeze Custom Show at Cheddar Valley RFC, Sharpham Rd, Cheddar, Somerset (BS27 3DR). Tickets £5. More info from 07939 486063 or Facebook.

8 June: Triumph Bike Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

8 June: Ride of the Ruperts from Moto Girl, Unit 17, Orchard Business Centre, Sanderson Way, Tonbridge, Kent (TN9 1QF). More info' from www.rideoftheruperts.co.uk

8 June: BSA Owners' Club Day at the Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum, Bashley Cross Road, near New Milton, Hamps (BH25 5SZ). More info' from www.sammymiller.co.uk

8 Jun: Normous Newark Autojumble at The Showground, Drove Lane, Winthorpe, Newark, Notts (NG24 2NY). More info' from www.newarkautojumble.co.uk

12-15 June: European H.O.G Rally at Medulin, Croatia. More info' from www.harley-davidson.com

12-15 June: Race the Waves at Bridlington Seafront, Bridlington, Yorks. More info' from www.backfireinfo.weebly.com

13-15 June: Bildt Not Bought Chopperfest at St. Annaparochie, Holland. More info' from Instagram.

13-15 June: Dutch Hardly-Rideables' Ratmeeting at MVC Rattlesnakes, Sportlaan 9a, 4571 CA Axel, Netherlands. More info' from www.rataplan-ratbikeclub.nl

13-15 June: Little Kev's Scruffy Puppy Rally at Bourne Rugby Club, Milking Nook Drove, Bourne, Lincs (PE10 0AX). More info' from 07804 087403 or Little Kev on Facebook.

13-15 June: Reading MAG's Lion Rally at a site near Reading, Berks. More info' from Facebook.

14 June: Daventry Motorcycle Festival in Daventry, Northants. More info' from www.daventrybikefest.co.uk

14-20 June: Dorothy's Speed Shop's Garage Run from Dorothy's Speed Shop, Braunton, Devon. More info' from www.dorothysspeedshop.com

15 June: Polish Bike Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

15 June: Bikefest24's Autojumble Sunday at West Woodlands Showground, Bunns Ln, Frome, Somerset (BA11 5ES). Autojumble pitches £10. More info' from www.bikefest24.co.uk

15 June: Harley-Davidson Day at the Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum, Bashley Cross Road, near New Milton, Hamps (BH25 5SZ). More info' from www.sammymiller.co.uk

18 June: Royston & District MCC's Royston & District Motorcycle Show at the Eternit Sports & Social Club, Whaddon Rd, Meldreth, Royston (SG8 5RL). More info' from Facebook.

18 June: Solstice Evening Bike Show at The Dashwood Roadhouse, Old Oxford Rd, Piddington, Bucks (HP14 3BH) from 6pm. More info' from Facebook.

19-22 June: Estonians MCC's Barnstormer Rally at the Rally Field. Runswick Lane, Runswick Bay, N. Yorks (TS13 5HR). Tickets £20 prebook or £25 on gate. More info' from 07533 204101 or Estoniansmcc@outlook.co.uk

19-22 June: The Farmyard Party at Duncombe Park, Helmsley, Yorks (YO62 5EB). More info' from www.maperevents.co.uk

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20-22 June: Sun of Solstice Bike & Music Festival at Southam RFC, Station Rd, Southam, Warks (CV47 2DH). Tickets £25. More info' from Facebook.

20-22 June: HDRCGB Region 19's New Forest Rally at Trojans Sports Club, Stoneham Ln, Eastleigh, Hants (SO50 9HT). Tickets £20 members or £25 non. More info' from 07887 746441 or region19@hdrcgb.org

20-22 June: Pissed & Confused MCC's Summer Rally at Little Waltham Sports & Social Club, Tufnell Hall, The St, Little Waltham, Essex (CM3 3NY). More info' from Facebook.

20-22 June: Snatch MCC's Snatch Rally at Wirral Rugby Club, Thornton Common Rd, Birkenhead, Wirral (CH63 0LT). More info' from Facebook.

21-22 June: Born Free Chopper Show at Silverado, California. More info' from www.bornfreeshow.com

21-22 June: Have a Dave Day at Barrow in Furness, Cumbria. More info' from www.visitbarrow.org.uk

22 June: Custom & Classic Bike & Car Show at the Royal

Gunpowder Mills, Beaulieu Drive, Waltham Abbey, Essex (EN9 1JY). Tickets £10. More info' from www.customandclassicshow.co.uk or Facebook.

22 June: Honda Bike Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

22 June: Ride Like a Girl Ladies' Motorcycle Day at M&P Direct, Glynstell Park, Glynstell Cl, Cardiff, Wales (CF11 8EY). More info' from Facebook.

22 June: Ton-Up Day Reunion at Industry & Supply, The Depot, Royal, Ordnance Rd, Weedon, Northants (NN7 4PS. More info' from www.industryandsupply.com

22 June: Prescott Bike Festival at Prescott Speed Hill Climb, Gotherington, Cheltenham, Gloucs (GL52 9RD). More info' from www.prescotthillclimb.co.uk

22 June: Seaford Motofest at The Martello Tower, Seafront, Seaford, East Sussex. More info' from Facebook.

22 June: Ladies' Day at the Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum, Bashley Cross Road, near New Milton, Hamps (BH25 5SZ). More info' from www.sammymiller.co.uk

22 June: Wheels-Next-The Sea at Wells Town FC, Beach Rd, Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk (NR23 1DR). Tickets £1 a wheel. More info' from 07470 386565 or stevefinch66@gmail.com

27-29 June: Dragstagia at Santa Pod, Airfield Rd, Podington, Beds (NN29 7XA). More info' from www.santapod.co.uk

27-29 June: Inner Circle RRC's Goosin' the Fox Rally at The Fox & Goose, The St, Greywell, Hook, Hamps (RG29 1BY). Tickets £20, day tickets £10. More info' from Facebook.

27-29 June: HOG Rutland Chapter's Horseshoe Rally at Greetham Community Centre, Greetham, Grantham, Lincs (LE15 7NG). Tickets £37.50. More info' from 07989 859908 or rally@rutlandchapter.co.uk

27-29 June: Wolfpack MCC's Yeknod Rally at Mill Lane, Chalgrove, Oxon (OX44 7SL). Tickets £15 prebook or £20 on gate, day tickets £10. More info' from 07871 200140 or Facebook.

27-29 June: Bracan MCC's Pistons & Pints Rally at The Brighton Ferry, Brighton, Selby, Yorks (YO8 6DH). Tickets £20 prebook or £25 on gate. More info' from www.bracanmcc.co.uk or Facebook.

27-29 June: Greenman MCC's Chaos on the Isle of Guernsey, Channel Islands. More info' from www.chaosevents.com

27-29 June: Blackpool Area MAG Rally at Fleetwood Rugby Club, Melbourne Avenue, Fleetwood FY7 8AY. Tickets £18.50 pre-book or £20 on gate. More info from 07943 254009 or Facebook.

27-29 June: Shoulder of Mutton MCC's Cowpat Rally at Amber Valley Rugby Club Somercotes, Derbys (DE55 4NQ). More info' from Facebook.

27-29 June: Monsters Inc MCC's Monster Bash at Mary Jo's, Barntown, Co. Wexford, Eire (Y35 H626)/ Tickets 15 Eruro. More info' from 00353 872 490461 or Facebook.

28 June: Sunbeam MCC's Four Dales Tour from Arkengarthdale, N. Yorks. More info' from www.sunbeam-mcc.co.uk

28 June: Walsham Wheels Motorcycle Fun Day at North Walsham Memorial Park, New Rd, North Walsham, Norfolk (NR28 9DF). More info' from Facebook.

28 June: Gotts Park Custom Show at Gotts Park, Armley Ridge Rd, Leeds (LS12 2QX). More info' from Facebook.

28 June: North Walsham Wheels Show at a site in North Walsham, Norfolk. More info' from Facebook.

28-29 June: Kyndred Spirits MCC's Shot in the Dark Rally at Hexham Racecourse, High Yarridge, Hexham, Northumberland (NE46 2JP). Tickets £10. More info' from Facebook.

29 June: Triton/Cafe Racer Day & BSA GS & RGS OC at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

29 June: Romney Marsh Ride-In Show & Bike Jumble at Hamstreet, Kent (TN26 2JD). Tickets £5. More info' from www.elkpromotions.co.uk

29 June: Sunbeam MCC's Northern Pioneer Road Test from Tennants Auctioneers, Auction Centre, Harmby Rd, Leyburn, N. Yorks (DL8 5SG). More info' from bsmith648@btinternet.com or www.sunbeam-mcc.co.uk

29 June: Motorcycles at the Manor at West Ashby Manor, West Ashby, near Horncastle, Lincs (LN9 5PY). More info' from motorcyclesatthemanor@gmail.com or Facebook.

29 June: Ride to Remember from Winchester Auto Barn, Sutton Scotney, Winchester, Hants (SO21 3NS) at 9.30am. More info' from Facebook.

29 June: Scooter Day at the Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum, Bashley Cross Road, near New Milton, Hamps (BH25 5SZ). More info' from www.sammymiller.co.uk

29 June: NCC Cambs' Custom & Classic Bike Show at Foreman's, March Rd, Ring's End, Wisbech, Cambs (PE13 4DB). Tickets £3. More info' from Facebook.

29 June: East Coast Harley Club's Custom Show at The Thurton George & Dragon, The St, Thurton, Norfolk (NR14 6AL). More info' from Facebook.

30 June: Ride Out to Cassington Bike Night at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

30 June: Cassington Bike Night at Cassington, Oxon. More info' from Facebook.

JULY

4-6 July: Antelope MCC's Rally at Barker Butts RFC, The Bob Coward Memorial Ground, Pickford Grange Ln, Coventry (CV5 9AR). Tickets £15 weekend or £5 days. More info' from Facebook.

4-6 July: MPH Vintage Sprint at RAF Deenthorpe, near Weldon, Northants (NN17 3AN). Weekend tickets £65, Sunday day ticket £15. More info' from www.mphvintagesprint.co.uk

4-6 July: Leviathan MCC's Billy Goat Rally at Wigton RUFC, Lowmoor Rd, Wigton, Cumbria (CA7 9QT). Tickets £20 prebook or £25 on gate. More info' from 07974 350810 or Facebook.

4-6 July: Future RC's Clay Pigeon Rally at the South Wingfield Social Club, High Rd, South Wingfield, Derbys (DE55 7LX). Tickets £15 prebook or £20 on gate. More info' from mark.hd@btinternet.com or Facebook.

4-6 July: AMOC Sussex's Independence Rally at The Fishbourne Centre, Blackboy Lane, Fishbourne, Chichester, W. Sussex (PO18 8BE). More info' from Facebook.

5 July: NCC London Diamond Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

5 July: Shelsey Walsh Bike Bonanza at Shelsey Walsh,

Worcs (WR6 6RP). More info' from www.shelsleywalsh.com

6 July: Bike Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

6 July: Ride Out to Brooklands Motorcycle Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

6 July: Old Boot Bikers' Summer Bash at a site in Dane End, Herts. More info' from Facebook.

6 July: Classic Motorcycle Day at Crich Tramway Village, Cromford Rd, Matlock, Derbys (DE4 5DP). More info' from www.tramway.co.uk

6 July: Smokin' to Sammy's Two-Stroke Day at the Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum, Bashley Cross Road, near New Milton, Hamps (BH25 5SZ). More info' from www.sammymiller.co.uk

10-13 July: Rock & Bike Fest at the Notts & Derby Showground, Longmoor Lane, Long Eaton, Derbys (DE72 2BU). Earlybird tickets £60. More info' from www.rockandbikefest.co.uk

10-13 July: Unwanted MCC's Cock Out Rally at The Rockbar, Shobnall Sports & Social Club, Shobnall Road, Burton upon Trent, Staffs (DE14 2BB). More info from www.unwantedmcc.co.uk

10-13 July: Southern Comfort V-Max Rally at Lodsworth Village Hall, Heath End Ln, Petworth, W. Sussex (GU28 9BY). More info' from Facebook.

11-13 July: Tomintoul Motorcycle Gathering at Tomintoul, Moray, Scotland. Tickets £25 prebook or £30 on gate. More info' from tomintoulmotorcyclegathering@yahoo.com

11-13 July: Harley-Davidson Club Wales' Rally at Usk RFC, Baron Ct, Woodside, Usk, Monmouthshire, Wales (NP15 1SU). Tickets £30. More info' from Facebook.

11-13 July: Barflys Rally at The Lower Lode, Bishops Walk, Tewkesbury, Gloucs (GL19 4RE). More info' from Facebook.

11-13 July: HDRCGB Region 18/20/Coaster's Triple Rally at Langney Sports Club, Priory Lane, Eastbourne, E. Sussex (BN23 7QH). Tickets £20 members or £25 non. More info' from 07751 364063 or coasters@hdrcgb.org

13 July: Brazilian Bike Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

13 July: Sunbeam MCC's Summer Pioneer & Vintage Run from The Motorcycle Workshop, London Rd, Bolney, W. Sussex (RH17 5PY). More info' from paul@danick.co.uk or www.sunbeam-mcc.co.uk

13 July: Sunbeam MCC's Fen Tiger Run from Wadlow Shoot Lodge, Wadlow Farm, Six Mile Bottom Rd, West Wrattling, Cambs (CB21 5NE) at 10.30am. More info' from www.sunbeam-mcc.co.uk

18-20 July: Halfway Heroes MCC's Leathered in Lincs Rally at a new site in Hainton, Lincs (LN8 6LX). Tickets £25 prebook or £30 on gate. More info' from www.halfway-heroes.co.uk

19 July: The 101 Run at Dreamlands, Margate, Kent. More info' from www.the101run.com

19 July: Evergreens Bike Meet at The Evergreens Lodge, Westbury, Dorset (DT9 3QZ). More info' from Facebook.

19 July: NCC Mercia's Bike & Car Show at Alcester RFC, Birmingham Rd, Alcester, Warks (B49 5QF). Tickets £2. More info' from Facebook.

19 July: Wheelie Wednesday Charity Rideout from Fendick's Fishery, Methwold Rd, Whittington, Norfolk (PE33 9GP). More info' from Facebook.

19 July: Kempton Park Autojumble at Kempton Park, Staines Road East, Sunbury on Thames, Middlesex (TW16 5AQ). More info' from www.kemptonautojumble.co.uk

20 July: VJMC & '70s Bike Day at the Ace Cafe, London. More info from www.london.acecafe.com

20 July: East Anglian Copdock Bike Show Charity Run from Copdock & Washbrook Village Hall, London Rd, Copdock, Ipswich, Suffolk (IP8 3JN) at 9am. More info' from www.eacbikeshow.co.uk

20 July: Supergood Bikers for Autism Ride-Out from Ryka's (Box Hill) to The Ceasefire Café at 9am. More info' from Facebook.

20 July: Honda Owners' Classic Bike Show at the Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum, Bashley Cross Road, near New Milton, Hamps (BH25 5SZ). More info' from www.sammymiller.co.uk

24-27 July: Rock & Blues Old School Weekender at the Coneygrey Showground, Pentrich, Derbys (DE5 3RL). More info' from www.therockandblues.com

Readers' Lives

SEND PICS OF YOUR BIKE, YOUR LADY, YOUR BLOKE (BUT NOT YOUR DINNER, THIS ISN'T FACEBOOK) TO NIK@BACKSTREETHEROES.COM



ABOVE: Melv's latest project, a '70s-style Sportster, the engine of which was used in a film, and dedicated, like all his bikes, to someone who's passed



TOP RIGHT: Bob Lund, as we've said before, has some very nice friends, doesn't he?



WINNER

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ABOVE: John T and a couple of mates rode down to Estapona, San Pedro... people were much more out-of-focus in those days, weren't they?

Buster was very impressed with Oor Rick's NC500 tales – he did this great ride in April 2023, and says it was a totally epic journey, and he loved every mile of it all the way up from the Isle of Wight

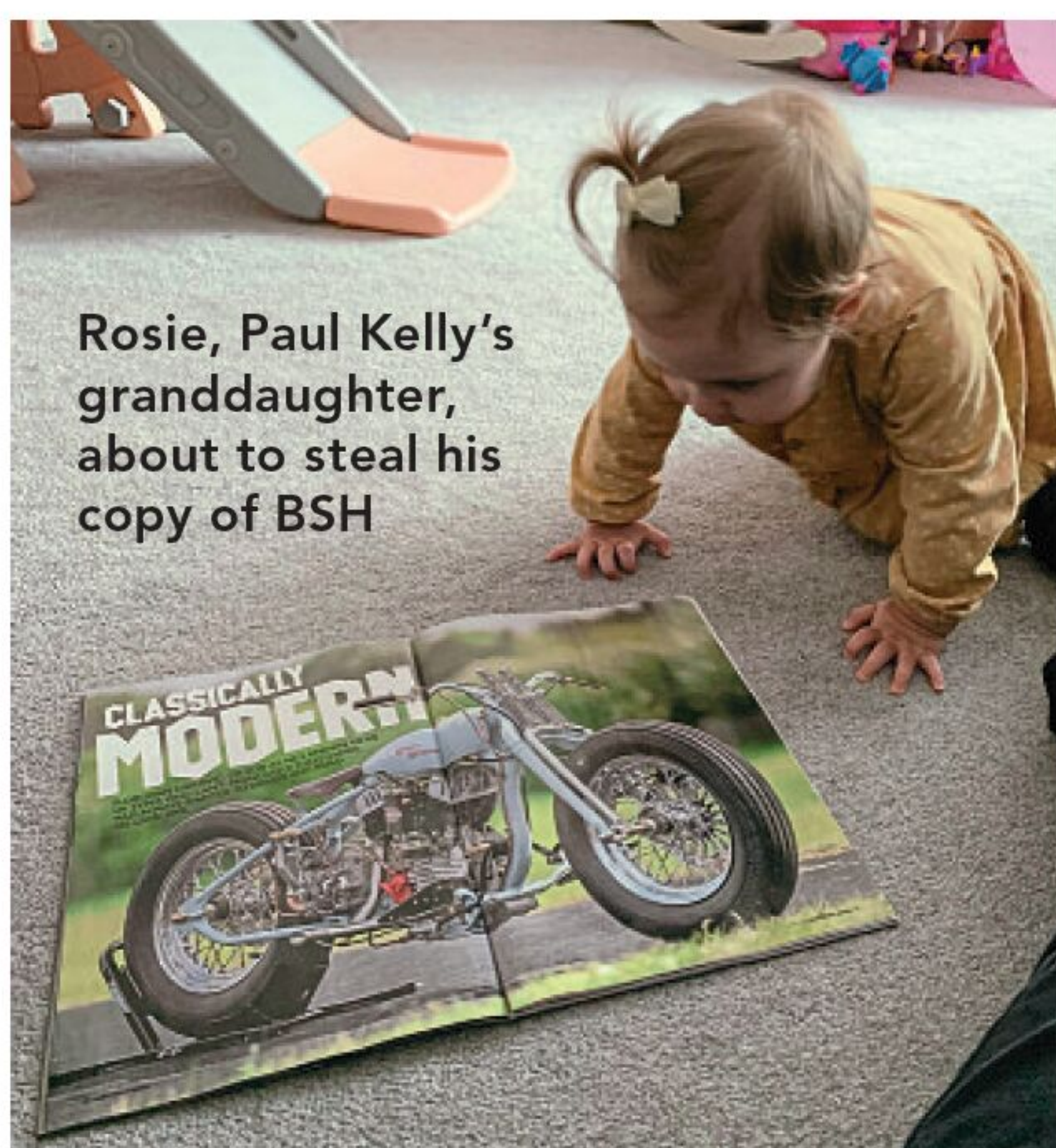




LEFT: Kip getting a pot at a Chopper Club do for her very cool Sporty – deserved!

ABOVE: Pic from Laurie that raises a lot of worrying questions that I'd rather not know the answers to

BELOW: Nik's influence on poor Pam – when they met she just had a perfectly normal golden Hornet...



Rosie, Paul Kelly's granddaughter, about to steal his copy of BSH



LEFT: The late Karen Lincoln and her fabulous back-to-front rat trike. Deepest condolences to Paul, her other half, from all of us here at BSH

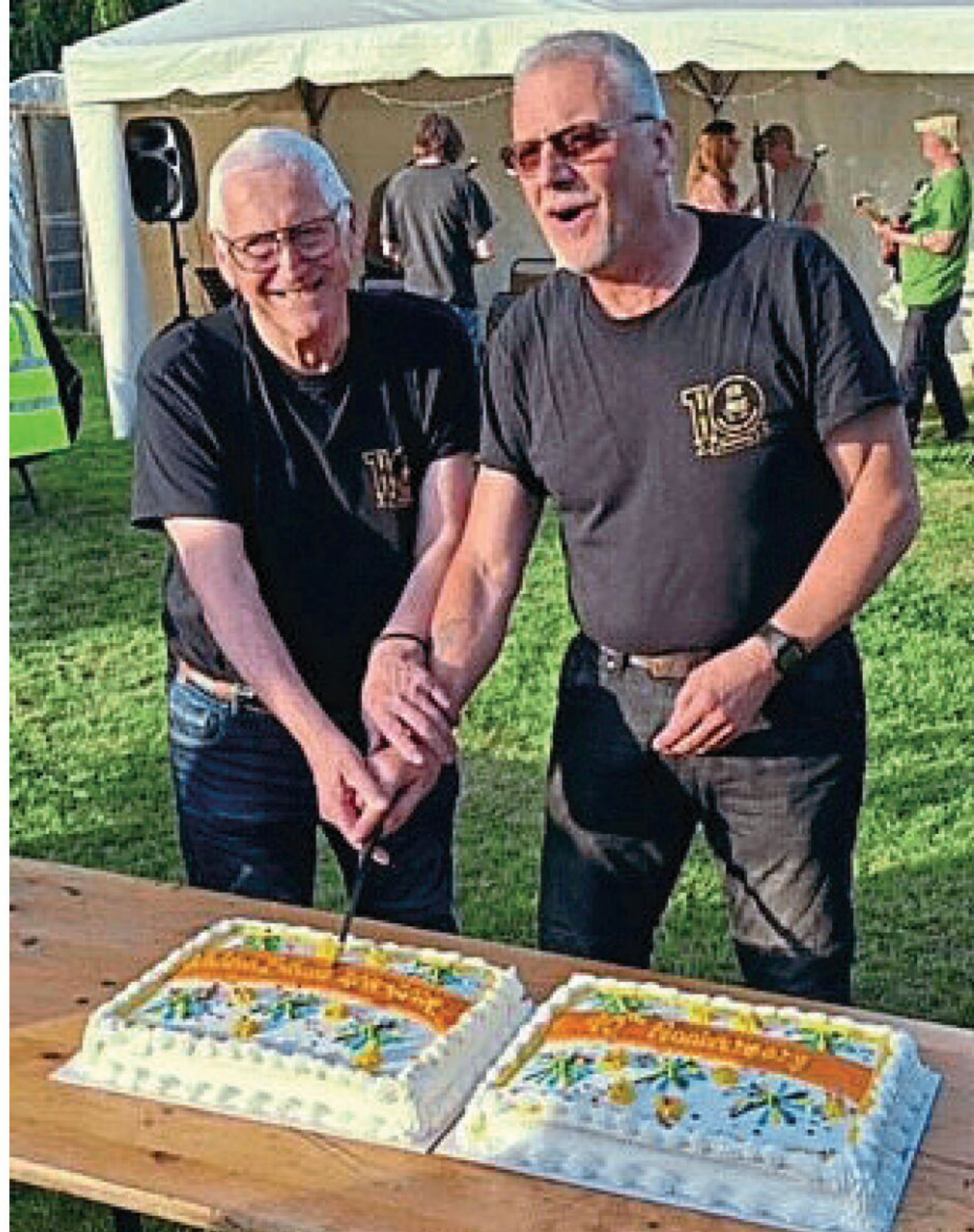
RIGHT: Chester's Shadow chop at the Baffle Haus in Wales on a rare quiet day



Readers' Lives



ABOVE: That Kev Gore, not only does his bike win trophies, but he's always surrounded by gorgeous ladies, too...



ABOVE: Mike Ratcliffe and Mike Wheeler cutting the Walden Bikers' 10th anniversary cake – they're the two guys who had the idea for Walden Bikers back in 2014. Pic by the wonderfully-named Stuart Stuart



ABOVE LEFT: Gareth Dixon's Harley at Stormin' a few years back – Santee gooseneck frame, 1450 Twin Cam motor, Ultima 5-speed right-hand-drive 'box/open primary, six-inch over springers, Mooneyes oil tank... coolness personified!

ABOVE: David Law's 125 Shadow won Best Custom at last year's Copdock show against some very stiff competition – another we must get photographed as soon as the weather gets better

LEFT: Alicia making a Lammy chop look even better – pic by Dave J from Screamin' Images

RIGHT: Briz's A10 all those years ago – he's still got it, y'know



Gibby

**Readers'
Lives**



Again, all these're from the Krazy Horse custom show in the middle of Bury St Edmunds years ago

LEFT: Ty Lawler's luvly Guzzi



BEST PIC EACH MONTH
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'THOSE WHO SAY IT CANNOT BE DONE SHOULD GET OUT OF THE WAY OF THE PERSON DOING IT.' CHINESE PROVERB

I always wanted a treehouse when I was a kid, but the only trees around us were in fields owned by the sort of people caricatured as Farmer Palmer in Viz magazine back in the late 80s when it was funny. In 2008 when we moved back to the house I'd grown up in, I still wanted a treehouse, but still didn't have a tree. I couldn't wait for one to grow, so I built a treehouse without one – a log cabin on stilts. People ask how I got it through planning? Simple. I talked to the neighbours, explained what I wanted to do, and they thought it was cool, so I built it. It meant working every dry evening and weekends for two years, but it was worth it. Now local kids occasionally use it for birthday parties, it doubles as a guest bedroom, and our office summer party usually concludes with the staff sliding down the fireman's pole from it at midnight.

All my life people've been telling me that I can't do all sorts of things, but I've never allowed any of them to convince me. When I set my business up in 2004, my wannabe business partner of the time told me that I couldn't possibly work eighteen hours a day, seven days a week, for long. Inside three weeks he'd bottled out. A year later we celebrated our first year-end in profit and, likewise, have every year since. It was the same when I was first elected MAG chairman; I'd propose something new, and one or two people, usually the same people every time, would chorus: "You can't do that!" and, invariably, the reason why we supposedly couldn't do anything was that MAG'd never done it before (there was also the added factor that they'd not thought of it – a human failing I call 'not invented here syndrome').

According to my detractors, I would then hypnotise, bully, and steamroll the NC into agreeing, and then we'd do the supposedly impossible. That was how, amongst other things, we persuaded then Chancellor Ken Clarke to bin his original continuous VED proposal that would've had you all buying tax discs for laid-up bikes. From that we went on to do even more impossible things, like inventing SORN and getting DVLA to adopt it, and freeing thousands of older vehicles from road tax completely.

We did the supposedly impossible again when we turned out hundreds of bikers in Westminster for a mass lobby of Parliament at three weeks' notice. I'll tell you a secret now that you need to tell your kids and grandchildren if you want them to have happy and great lives – whether you think you can, or you think you can't, you're absolutely right. Swimming, I learned at age six or seven, was all about confidence, and so is riding a bike, provided your sense of balance works. Whether you're out to find a romantic partner, selling a service, product, or idea, or changing the

way politics works, which we need to do, and now, if you think you can, you really can. Those who go through life thinking they're beat before they start are right – they are. They beat themselves – nobody did it for them. Those with a positive mindset are unbeatable.

One of the people I've admired most in my life was a woman whose name I never knew. When I started work at 16, I'd see her, every day, limping rapidly to work, one leg encased in metalwork with a massively built-up shoe. Whatever the weather she was there, off to a factory near us, never missing, save when she was on holiday. Her work ethic was outstanding. On the flip side, there are people I know who left school with me in 1979 who decided they were never going to work, and haven't. They've gone through life leeching off their parents and friends, sitting on their arses in front of a TV set, getting fatter and more brain-dead by the day. Unless you believe in reincarnation, and personally I don't, you only get one go at life on Earth, and you should bloody well make the most of it.

People ask me now, at age 61: "How can you go on, Neil?" I still happily work twice the hours of my staff, still squeeze MAG work into my schedules, and still maintain my own bikes, and do DIY around the home. To me it's an absurd question. How can I go on? How can I not? Time is so precious we should not waste an instant of it, not only for our own sakes but for those around us, and those who will come after us. MAG is currently engaged in the great existential struggle to save motorcycling. Our success will hinge on how much effort we put directly into that struggle, sure, but it will also hinge on the wider struggle to have a country better run for those who live in it. We need to rid ourselves of the politicians who always think they know better than us; who stuff their pockets and clothe themselves in freebies while taxing us to death; who cause our own people to live in fear while they sit safe and comfortable behind their security cordons. If there was ever a time to become an activist, now is that time.

Victory is not certain, but failure is not fatal. What is certain, though, is that those who go down fighting rise again, while those who tamely give up, or do not even try in the first place, lose forever. Join MAG today, do not delay, and one day, I promise you, we shall win. 🏍️

NEIL F. LIVERSIDGE
MAG NATIONAL CHAIRMAN



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devil's advocate

/dev.əlz 'æd.və.kət/

A person who expresses an opinion that disagrees with others so that there'll be an interesting discussion about an issue – teachers often play devil's advocate to provoke discussion in the classroom.

DESPITE HAVING BUILT MORE BIKES THAN I CAN REMEMBER (SOMETHING WHICH LIKELY SAYS MORE ABOUT THE STATE OF MY MEMORY THAN IT DOES ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE), THERE'S ONE THING ABOUT THE PROCESS THAT STILL SURPRISES ME, AND IT'S THE VOLUME OF CONSUMABLES A BUILD WILL ACTUALLY CONSUME.



see little point in reusing old fasteners, and even less point in replacing them with

anything inferior to the original. Generally, that means stainless steel unless specifications call for something else. I like to keep the workshop well stocked with the usual suspects (M6, M8, 5/16ths, etc.) but, occasionally, you find yourself in need of something a little more obscure.

For most of us, there'd be little point in buying a box of 200 2BA screws because, come the day you die, someone's going to throw 196 2BA screws into a skip. I found myself in that very situation last week, but within a mere five minutes I'd sourced what I required in a sensible quantity, at a reasonable price, and ordered them. Do you remember what it was like in the good old days before the internet? Chances are you'd have spent a few hours traipsing round engineers' merchants, ironmongers, and your mates' sheds to, eventually, find what you wanted... or at least five of the half-dozen you actually needed.

The internet's made building bikes so much easier. If you never built a bike in the pre-digital days of gas lamps and gruel, then it really is difficult to imagine just how awkward it could be. Next day delivery?

No, try twenty-eight days, but not until the vendor had received your *cheque. 360-degree product images on a big clear screen? Forget it, you were lucky if there was an out-of-focus black-and-white photograph, but it'd most likely be a hand-drawn sketch in a magazine. Product comparisons and in-depth reviews? Give over, you bought what was offered, and if it turned out to be crap, then you could always try and move it on.

Of course, the internet isn't only about shopping, is it? Oh no, aside from cats and other stuff, it's a place full of ideas and inspiration. Want to see a picture of a Panhead with twelve-inch over-springers, and a coffin tank painted in blue pearl with orange flames? Coming right up. A supercharged CZ 175 drag bike running a slick, and chromed wheelie bars? Hmm possibly. Basically, if it's out there, then it's probably on there, but I do sometimes wonder whether the ease it affords us has perhaps also inadvertently robbed us of something?

Back in the halcyon days of yore, ideas were contained to some degree. If someone had one, even a good one, then it'd most likely only be seen or heard about by a relatively small number of people and, given the probable proximity to the original source, the small circle who did see it were quite unlikely to have produced a direct copy, or even considered doing so. They may've

borrowed certain elements and, possibly, built something of a similar style but, through choice, it'd always be noticeably different.

Things aren't like that anymore, though, and the rippling concentric circles now spread further and faster than ever. If you have an idea tomorrow morning, make something, or paint something, then it can potentially be seen by millions of people by tea-time. Of course, we all need some inspiration, a spark to ignite our own imagination, and whet our creative appetite, but when you're completely surrounded by the ideas and thoughts of others, then yours can become hemmed in – without the space to breathe and grow, it's surprising how quickly they'll wilt.

A custom motorcycle is, or should be, an expression of your individuality, and while copying can, and often does, require skill, it also requires negligible imagination. The imagination you possess is as individual to you as your fingerprints, but when the requirement to use it's removed, then individuality falters alongside it because the two are so tightly intertwined that they're largely inseparable. The internet's a fantastic tool, and a truly amazing resource, but next time you're in the shed, perhaps think about doing something not because you've seen it somewhere before, but because you've never seen it anywhere – ever? 🐉

NORM

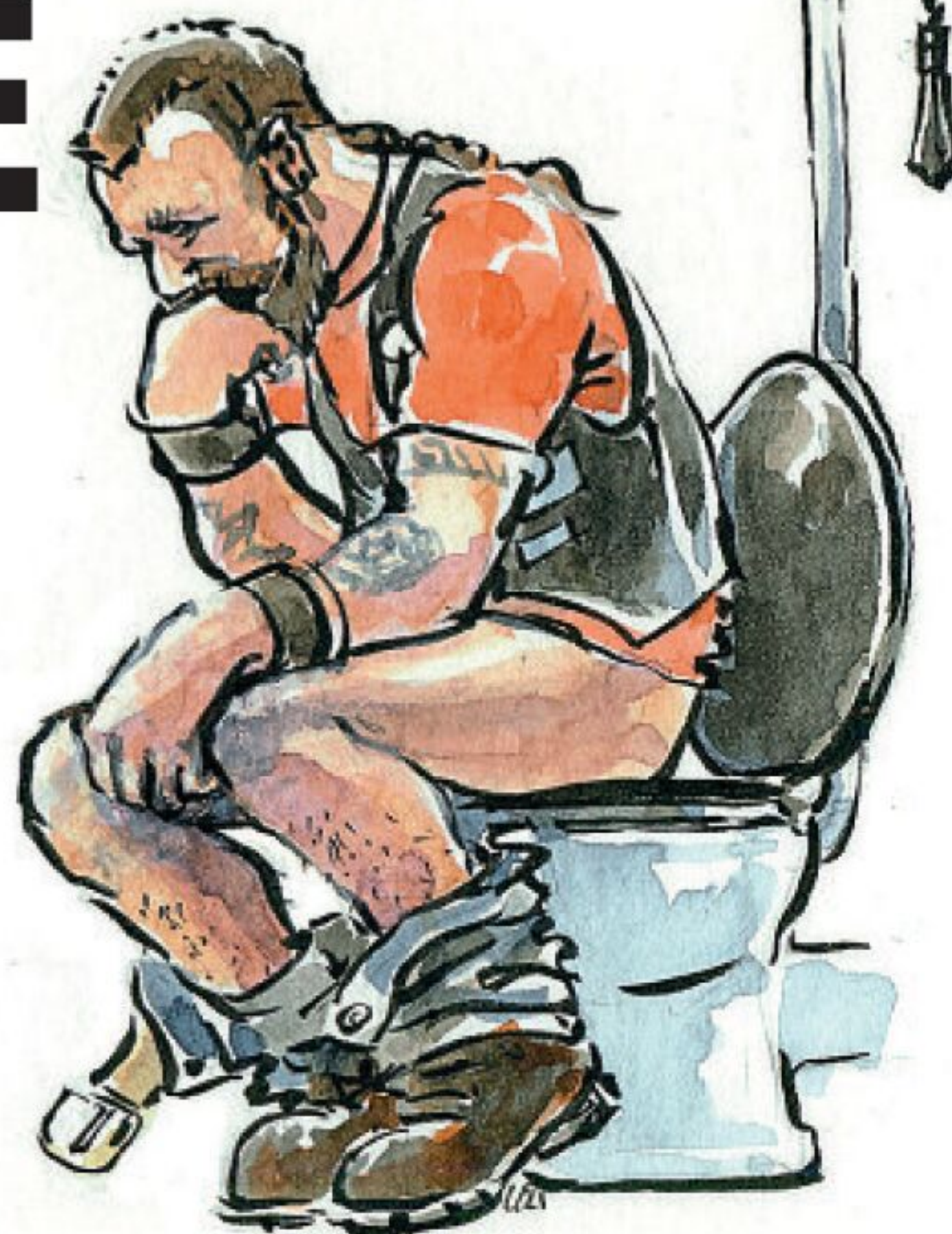
*Ask your mum

REMINISCING...

THE HARD TALE

PART THREE

JUST THEN, AS I STARTED THE LONG PLUNGE BACK INTO DEPRESSION, THE REP' RETURNED WITH THE KEY. HE EYED THE BIKE QUIZZICALLY, AND THEN LOCATED THE KEY'S HOLE (WHICH WAS IN A PANEL NEXT TO MY LEG).



nce we had the power on, he pulled the choke lever on the T-bars, and pressed the starter button. The bike roared instantly into barking mad, end-of-the-world, window-shattering,

Lancaster bomber-style life.

After 30 seconds of howling insanity he closed the choke, and the smooth-as-silk engine burbled happily away to itself. He cracked the throttle open, and the chop snarled at him in response. I sat with my hands on the 'bars, blipping the throttle. In the reflection of the bike's single mirror, I could see I was grinning like a Cheshire cat.

At last, I dismounted from the growling machine and the rep turned everything off. We both stood looking at the bike in silence. The engine ticked as its metal heart cooled. He didn't need to talk – he knew what I was going to say next. My brain ordered me to walk away, but my mouth asked if he'd do finance. He said he couldn't on a bike like this, but'd hold it if I wanted time to sort out a bank loan. My brain ordered me to thank him politely and leave, but my heart overrode this instruction, and my mouth informed him I'd be back tomorrow to put a deposit down, or even pay the whole price of two grand. We shook hands, and I tottered like a drunk outside and into the sunshine.

Once again, my brain gave strict orders, which the rest of me chose to ignore. "Go straight to the bus stop – do NOT go into the Halifax Building Society, they hate you there... no, come away from that door... do NOT walk up to the Enquiries desk... no, you don't want any help from this bank clerk... tell her you've made a mistake... tell her you thought this was a cake shop, and leave immediately!"

In horrified shock, I heard my mouth say: "I'd like to speak to someone about a loan please... yes, I have an account here, and, yes, I am free to talk now as it happens." Later I put the whole experience down to being possessed by the spirit of the bike, or the after-effects of the three bottles of poppers, several gallons of lager, and two bottles of Thunderbird (remember that?)

we'd got through at the Bulldog. My brain shrieked at the top of its lungs: "Do NOT sign that, you dickhead! Put that pen down... no, we don't want PPI... do NOT shake that man's hand... oh, you knob'ead, I bloody give up!"

An hour after walking into the Halifax, I was sat in the nearby park trying to fathom how I'd actually managed to blag myself a £3k bank loan which'd buy the chop, buy a cheap Ford Fiesta, and pay for the XS to be fixed and, a cool 48 hours later, I was back in the bike shop, signing the paperwork and being given the keys. I rode home like a god of thunder aboard a metal stallion from hell... well, that's how I felt anyway!

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Ying and yang, black and white, good and bad – you have to experience the downs in this life in order to get to the ups; you also have to bear in mind that it's probably the same for everyone else out there in the big world. You can hedge your bets, play it safe, and never take a chance, or you can dive headlong into things and trust to luck – if you can find a line bordering on the two, then things usually turn out for the best... usually.

I owned the chop for years, and had some brilliant times on it. For reasons that escape me it was called Hortense (I think after a clever witch in a story), and she was my ride to work in winter and summer, and my weekend fun bike. It was the most mechanically reliable bike I've ever owned, and I honestly thought I'd keep it forever, but circumstances decreed otherwise, and sadly we parted company. When a man from Bradford bought my bike and rode it away, I walked into the kitchen, grabbed the JD bottle, and tried to numb the pain of our parting. I think JK Rowling actually got it right with her dark magic Horcrux idea in the Harry Potter books – you can hide pieces of your soul in an object; I felt that part of my soul was in that bike, so many memories were attached to it.

Our last big ride together was to Stormin the Castle the year the rain came down like the end of the world. I can honestly say I've never seen rain like that, here or

abroad – as anyone who trekked up the A1 on that fateful Friday evening'll probably testify, it was like sitting in a carwash, set to full rinse. Hour after hour it hammered down incessantly – at one point the exhausts were actually under water as I pulled on to the site. Hortense made a noise like a motorboat crossing a lake, but never for one second faltered or missed a beat. Soaked as I was, somehow I got the tent up and headed to the beer tent, where I got as drunk as a lord with a mate from Blackpool I'd bumped into. The rain was battering the marquee, deafeningly loud, and at the night's end I staggered through the mud and sludge to my bedraggled tent. Hortense sat miserably in the downpour. It was impossible to sleep – my sleeping bag was sopping wet, and even my helmet'd filled with water. At 6.30am I surrendered to the weather, got up, and packed up. As the rain continued its remorseless attack and the wind howled, I said a silent prayer, and hit the starter button. I needn't've worried – Hortense roared into life just as effortlessly as she did in the showroom all those years ago, and I slithered off the site and pointed the bike south. About four hours later, MAG reluctantly pulled the plug, and the rally was off.

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I think Hortense probably saved me from going insane after that Bulldog weekend. She wasn't everyone's cup of tea but, to my eyes, she was fantastic – by a mile the coolest bike I've ever owned. It'd be great to think she's still out there somewhere, rattling the windows, and stealing the show wherever she goes. 🐾

JOHN LLOYD

A black and white photograph of Rick Hulse, a man wearing a bowler hat and sunglasses, speaking into a microphone. The photo is partially obscured by the large red title 'RICK HULSE' on the left.

RICK HULSE

THE DIFFICULTY IN AVOIDING THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS IN THE WORKPLACE'S GREATLY COMPOUNDED BY A SOCIETAL BELIEF THAT THE COMMON COLD, OR EVEN INFLUENZA, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED A MINOR AILMENT, WITH ALL TOO MANY PEOPLE READY TO PROVIDE SNEERING JOKES ABOUT MAN FLU, OR TO RIDICULE SICK PEOPLE AS SUFFERING WITH A BIT OF A COUGH, WHILE IGNORING THE VIRULENT COMMUNICABILITY OF THESE VIRAL ILLNESSES, AND BEING IGNORANT OF HOW THE SEVERITY OF THESE VIRAL CONDITIONS CAN VARY GREATLY FROM ONE INDIVIDUAL TO ANOTHER.

SPREADING THE MISERY

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hat may be a minor malady or a trifling inconvenience to one person, to another person, particularly one with a suppressed or diminished immune system, can be a serious debilitating illness that may take months to get over, or a potentially life-threatening condition. In the workplace the problem is further exacerbated by short-sighted employers who cling to Victorian attitudes toward their employees, or indoctrinated managers who consider colds and flu to be minor issues and insist that employees attend work even when sick, thereby ensuring that one unwell employee soon becomes many unwell employees, with the inevitable subsequent reduction in productivity and/or attendance as a result of their thoughtlessness and failure in their duty of care.

Incredibly, even in UK hospitals, even on respiratory illness wards, managers often insist that staff should attend work when suffering from a cold, or flu virus, with the threat of disciplinary action if they don't. This ridiculous, and outrageously inconsiderate, attitude puts other staff members, and their vulnerable patients, at risk, which is, perhaps, just one example of the folly of the NHS employing managers who have no clinical experience whatsoever. Schools're often just as guilty of such short-sighted employment policies, insisting that suffering from a cold or flu is not an acceptable reason for being absent from work, and thereby facilitating the spread of the virus to other members of staff and pupils,

then on into the wider population. Parents who send their children to school when they know them to be similarly suffering, or with any other communicable viral illness such as chickenpox or measles, are also actively complicit in the thoughtless and selfish spreading of viral illnesses, and many restaurants and shops're similarly guilty of operating these draconian conditions for attendance, showing a total disregard for the welfare of their staff and customers.

While irresponsible employers, and box-ticking managers, continue to treat staffing levels as being of far greater important than maintaining a healthy workforce, the common cold and outbreaks of flu'll remain far more common than they need to be, and many of the more vulnerable people in our society'll continue to run the gauntlet of serious viral illness, or even death, whenever they venture out of their own homes. Is it any wonder that so many vulnerable people become isolated and alone in a society that's so blasé about illnesses that can put them in very real danger?

Operating a policy of employees staying isolated at home when suffering any type of communicable illness, without fear of disciplinary action or ridicule, would serve to greatly reduce infection rates in the workplace which, by default, would protect the number of healthy employees, and greatly reduce the risk of infecting customers, while maintaining a good level of productivity. It really isn't rocket science, is it? Unfortunately, the philosophy and/or mindset of the majority of employers and managers

in the UK's never evolved beyond that of the Victorian mill owners and industrialists who firmly believed that an employee's sole reason to exist was to increase the wealth of the employer, while they completely ignored the fact that healthy and happy employees're far more productive than sick, abused, or oppressed employees. Sadly, in the total absence of any socialist principals in the current government, and the majority of trades unions having long ago sold out just about every principal they were founded upon, the only people who can really make a difference in relation to the spread of viral illnesses are us, the individual human beings. Each of us can make a conscious decision not to spread these viruses by avoiding contact with others when we're ill, no matter how common that illness may be.

In the case of influenza, the annual vaccination programs've made a huge difference to infection rates, and the rates of hospital admissions and/or fatalities in recent times, though this's now having to compete with the numerous pathetically transparent conspiracy theories/spurious claims of vaccinations causing autism, that all-too-often emanate from the twisted minds of far-right Christian bigots in the USA, via social media.

During the Covid pandemic, the vast majority of motorcycle rallies in the UK were cancelled due to lockdown rules or the restrictions on large groups of people mixing due to the risk of spreading the infection but, still, at those few precious events that were fortunate enough to be able to go ahead, there were people who chose to attend even when they knew they were infected with the Covid virus. Consequently, many more people were suffering with it a few days later.

The blame there lay squarely on the shoulders of those selfish, ignorant, uncaring people who decided that their pleasure was more important than the health and wellbeing of every other person present. Many of those same people, knowing they put everybody else at risk at those events, no doubt never tire of telling people that one of the great things about being a biker is "how we all look after each other"... The idea of people habitually being mindful of the health and welfare of other people, even total strangers, would be such a lovely example of that oft-referenced humanity we're all allegedly capable of exhibiting. Still, I'll not be holding my breath waiting for that to happen (though that could be another way of reducing the spread of colds and flu, at least for a few minutes). 🍷

RICK HULSE

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Month

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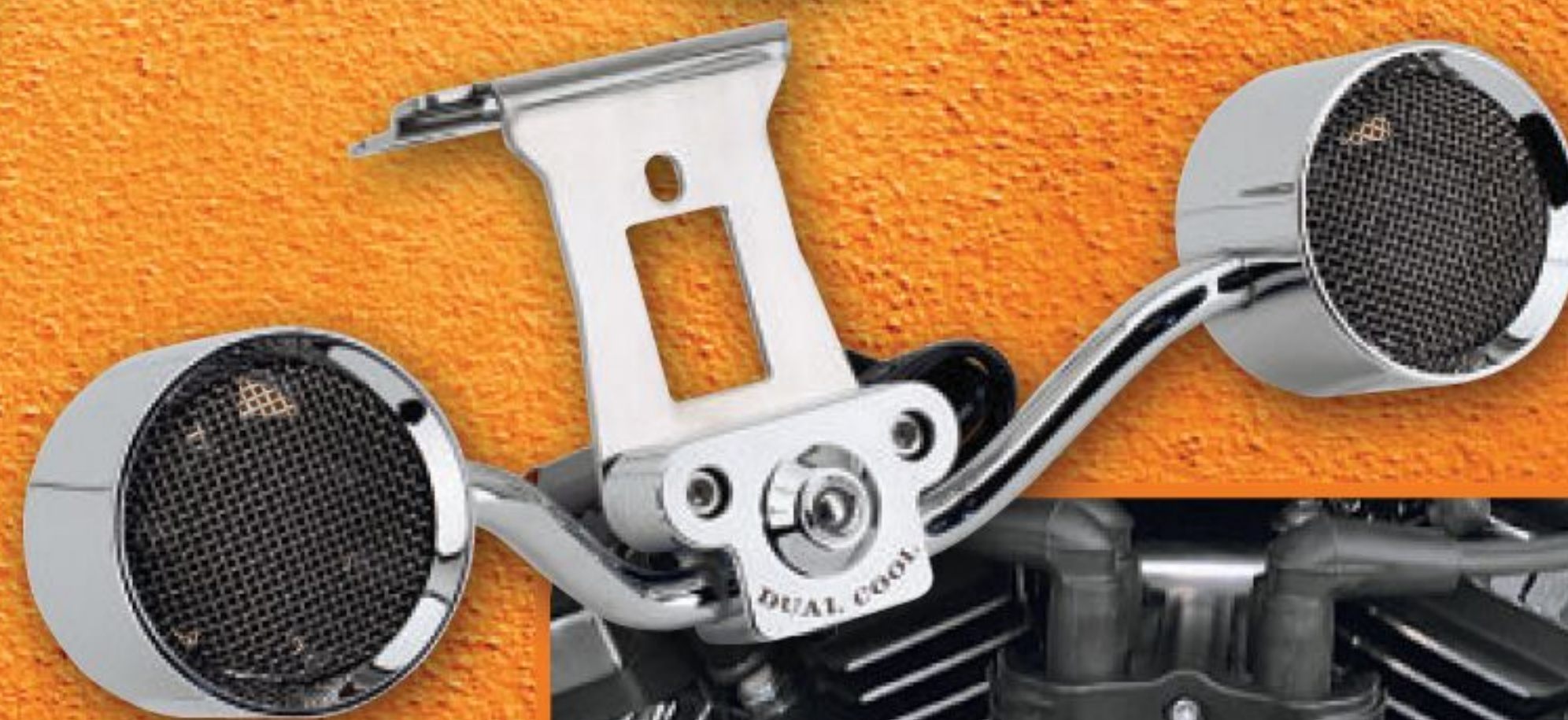
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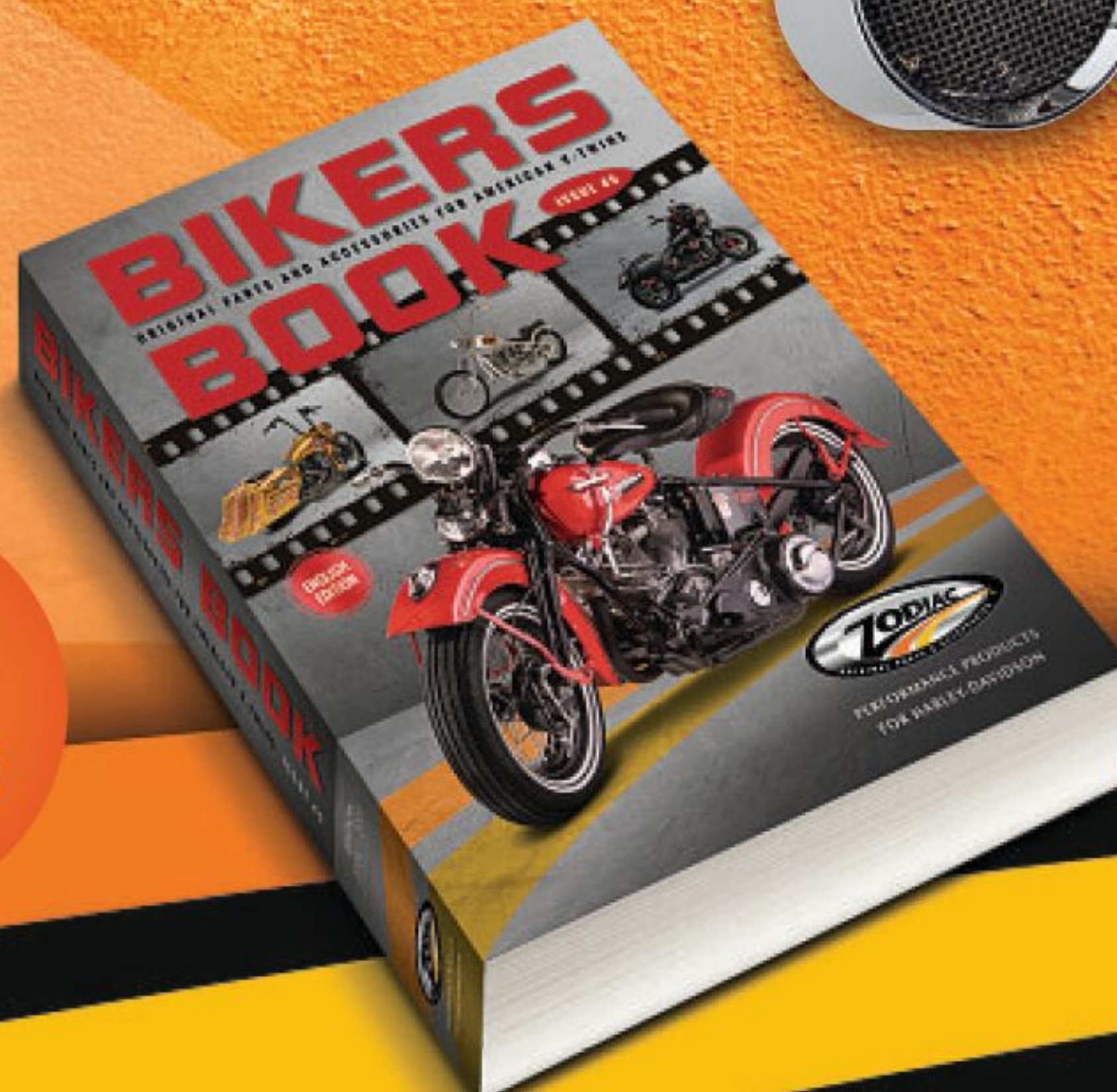
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